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## The Cathedral Builders in England

*by*

*EDWARD S. PRIOR, F.S.A.*

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# THE CATHEDRAL BUILDERS IN ENGLAND

BY

EDWARD S. PRIOR, M.A., F.S.A.

AUTHOR OF "A HISTORY OF GOTHIC ART IN ENGLAND."

LONDON

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# CONTENTS

PAGE

PREFACE . . . . . 11

INTRODUCTION . . . . . 15

CHAPTER I.

THE CATHEDRAL BUILDERS OF THE FIRST PERIOD, 1066-1150 . . . . . 27

CHAPTER II.

THE CATHEDRAL BUILDERS OF THE SECOND PERIOD, 1160–1207 . . . . . 37

CHAPTER III.

THE CATHEDRAL BUILDERS OF THE THIRD PERIOD, 1207–1250 . . . . . 50

CHAPTER IV.

THE SUMMIT OF GOTHIC ART, 1250–1290 . . . . 60

CHAPTER V.

THE CATHEDRAL BUILDERS OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY, 1290–1350 . . . . . 70

PAGE

CHAPTER VI.

The Official Cathedral Builders of the Late Fourteenth Century, 1350–1410 . . . 82

CHAPTER VII.

The Cathedral Builders up to the Dissolution of the Monasteries, 1400–1538 . . . . 89

CHAPTER VIII.

The English Cathedrals in the Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries . . . 98

CHAPTER IX.

The Cathedral Builders of the Nineteenth Century 106

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

## PRINTED IN COLOURS FROM ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS


CHRIST IN GLORY. From a *Missal* of the Fourteenth Century . . *Frontispiece*

THE ANGELS WITH THE SEVEN VIALS. From an *Apocalypse* of the Fourteenth Century . . . . . 18

A GROUP OF BISHOPS. From a *Psalter* of the early Fifteenth Century . . . 78

A BISHOP CARRYING THE SACRAMENT. From a *Lectionary* of the Fifteenth Century 94


## OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS


| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL, FROM THE SOUTH | *W. Hollar* | 32 |
| 2. NORWICH CATHEDRAL, THE NAVE | *F. Mackenzie* | 32 |
| 3. WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL, THE NORTH TRANSEPT | *E. Blore* | 32 |
| 4. DURHAM CATHEDRAL | *J. S. Cotman* | 32 |
| 5. DURHAM CATHEDRAL, FROM THE SOUTH | *W. Daniell* | 32 |
| 6. CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL, NORTH AISLE OF QUIRE | *G. Cattermole* | 32 |
| 7. OXFORD CATHEDRAL, THE QUIRE | *R. Garland* | 32 |
| 8. SALISBURY CATHEDRAL, FROM THE CLOISTERS | *J. W. M. Turner* | 56 |
| 9. LINCOLN CATHEDRAL, FROM THE EAST | *W. Hollar* | 56 |
| 10. WELLS CATHEDRAL, PART OF THE WEST FRONT | *J. Harold Gibbons* | 56 |
| 11. YORK MINSTER, THE NORTH TRANSEPT | *E. Blore* | 56 |
| 12. WESTMINSTER ABBEY, THE CONFESSOR'S CHAPEL | *G. P. Boyce* | 64 |
| 13. WESTMINSTER ABBEY, NORTH AMBULATORY | *F. Nash* | 64 |
| 14. SALISBURY CATHEDRAL, THE CHAPTER HOUSE. | *F. Mackenzie* | 64 |
| 15. LINCOLN CATHEDRAL, THE CHANCEL | *R. Garland* | 64 |

| | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
| 16. Southwark Cathedral, the Old Nave | *T. C. Dibdin* | 64 |
| 17. Exeter Cathedral, from the South-East | *S. Rayner* | 72 |
| 18. Chichester Cathedral, from the South-East | *R. Garland* | 72 |
| 19. Ely Cathedral, the Octagon | *R. Garland* | 72 |
| 20. Wells Cathedral, Arches under the Tower | *R. Garland* | 72 |
| 21. Salisbury Cathedral, the small Transept | *F. Mackenzie* | 72 |
| 22. Gloucester Cathedral, the Presbytery | *J. Harold Gibbons* | 72 |
| 23. Gloucester Cathedral, the Cloisters | *R. Garland* | 88 |
| 24. York Minster, the Quire | *F. Mackenzie* | 88 |
| 25. Winchester Cathedral, the West Front | *R. Garland* | 88 |
| 26. York Minster, the East End | *F. Mackenzie* | 88 |
| 27. Lincoln Cathedral, the Western Towers | *P. De Wint* | 88 |
| 28. Sherborne Abbey Church | *J. Constable* | 88 |
| 29. St. George's Chapel, Windsor | *W. Hollar* | 104 |
| 30. St. George's Chapel, Windsor, the Quire | *W. Hollar* | 104 |
| 31. St. Paul's Cathedral, the West Front | *T. Malton* | 104 |
| 32. St. Paul's Cathedral, the Quire | *R. Trevitt* | 104 |
| 33. Truro Cathedral, from the South-East | *Frith* | 104 |


*The device on the cloth binding shows the Seal of the Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral which was used from the year* 1175 *to the beginning of the Fifteenth Century.*

# PREFACE

ONE may be allowed to tell the story of Cathedral Builders as that of the makers of mediaeval churches, monastic, secular, collegiate and parochial, whether built for monks, canons or parish use, whether they were designed as cathedral, or have now come to have a bishop's chair. It happens that under this latter category many various kinds of churches can be discussed. The cathedrals of England as they can now be reckoned under the multiplication of dioceses, first in Henry VIII's reign, and then during the last hundred years, include pretty well every big church that has been left us in fair condition from the mediaeval centuries. In almost all points we have the arts of those centuries continuously represented.

It is true that as regards the sculpture and painting, the evidences of mediaeval ability are too damaged for general appreciation, and must be reconstructed from mere shreds ; yet for the wider history and for the reflection of religious and national life—though the mirror be cracked in a thousand pieces—each fragment of building gives us something. The chances of preservation have been of course haphazard ; but the general ideas of the following pages can be illustrated from the well-known cathedrals, and one will seldom have to make excursions away from them. Only our earliest pre-Conquest art is scantily represented therein. Save in the crypt of Ripon, and in the excavated foundations at York and Peterborough, we have no stone *in situ* that can be accepted as definitely laid anterior to the Conquest. The massive Norman erections swept the Saxon off the sites.[1]

Of the colossal building that grew from the Norman Conquest, our cathedrals give us a series of examples : the fabrics of the great Benedictine abbeys have been preserved by the circumstance almost peculiar

[1] Westminster Abbey, however, was for a few years a cathedral, and will be taken as such in these papers ; and it shows some preservation of the Confessor's buildings. The most important pre-Conquest church remaining is at Brixworth.

to England that bishops had their seats in monks' churches. Whereas on the continent monkish building has largely perished, the monastic cathedrals of Winchester, Durham, Norwich and Ely remain to give us some of the finest "Romanesque" fabric in Europe; and other Benedictine churches, made cathedral under Henry VIII's foundation, such as Gloucester and Peterborough, supplement the record. There were, too, cathedral and secular churches built on the Benedictine model, such as Chichester and Southwell, and nuns' churches, such as Romsey, which still have their early structures. For the later richly ornamented style of English "Romanesque" there survives less complete representation at Rochester, Hereford and in the Durham Galilee. The abbey and priory churches that best expressed it are in ruin or swept away. One must turn to parish churches such as Iffley in Oxfordshire, Adel in Yorkshire, Barfreston in Kent, or Kilpeck in Herefordshire, to get an understanding of its exuberant carving.

The "Transitional" style, in which the birth of Gothic art stands revealed, came coincidentally with the foundations of a new monastic era —that of the reformed orders—and also with the growing influence of the Bishops. Our English cathedrals give us good examples, for though most churches of the Regular Canons and of the Cistercians remain only in ruin, we have three cathedrals showing the essentially native sources of our English Gothic art. At Wells Bishop Reginald's church is a thoroughly English example; Canterbury quire, both by Gervase's contemporary account of its building and by its own significant architecture, gives us the exact measure of the French importation and of the contemporary English style, as each was built under its successive master masons, William of Sens and William the Englishman. And Ripon cathedral, if less extensive, has its special importance as a canon's church and example of the north-country style, which had such vigorous expression in the reformed building of the lands north of Humber. Finally at Chichester, Winchester, Ely and Lincoln were works of full English Gothic, achieved before 1208 when the Pope's Interdict of England made a pause in religious building.

Of the "Early English" building after the Interdict, the Lincoln and Salisbury cathedrals are two examples of the first class whose every stone left unrestored tells us histories of their builders. The ideals of

English churchmanship, the ambitions of English craftsmanship, the independence of English feeling, can be well traced in them. And of the same style were the Wells front ; the Worcester, Rochester and Ely quires ; the York transept and the Durham Altars, and as a non-cathedral example of great value the east part of Beverley minster. For the next phase there are the later buildings of Lincoln and Salisbury, the nave of Lichfield, the north transept of Hereford and the quire of St. Albans—and as built in cathedral likeness the great abbey church of Westminster. Its chapter-house, too, with those following at Salisbury, Southwell, Wells, and York, show the " Summit " style of English art, as this, for some thirty years, leaving its insular isolation, flowed on, in the current of the continental progress, but still with a destiny of its own.

The English " Decorated " of the fourteenth century has its splendid example in Exeter cathedral steeped in the aristocratic and romantic sentiment of the western style. Equally characteristic were the sumptuous quires of the north-country churches : but those of the Regular Canons were mostly ruined at the Dissolution, and remain now only at Ripon and Carlisle. At Selby and Howden are representative churches, but York nave was the greatest work of the period. At Lichfield and Chester the quires, though much altered, are examples of mid-English building that should be noted ; while Bristol, Wells and Gloucester cathedrals display the west-country movement that was to carry on English style during the eclipse of the French art. The quire of the last has that distinctive English " Perpendicular," which after the Black Death was conveyed to the quire of York minster and the naves of Winchester and Canterbury, and appears in the royal chapels of Windsor and King's College, Cambridge.

Then in the fifteenth century, the expansion of civic and commercial ideals, which followed on the decay of aristocratic and monastic sentiment, has expression in the great parish churches—with their guild-built aisles, their chantries of merchant and trader, their canon-stalled quires, such as now have come into cathedral use at Manchester, Newcastle and Wakefield.

The great stoppage of church-building which came of the Dissolution, brings for a time the tale of cathedral-building to an end. The times of great Elizabeth showed Gothic art living in the craft of the

village mason and carpenter, with a veneer of classic form drawn from German pattern-books, and expended on the houses of noblemen and squires. Our churches at the beginning of the last century had many examples of the homely solid taste characteristic of this time, which in the monuments of the mason, and the screens, pews and galleries of the carpenter, lasted up to the end of the seventeenth century. The Gothic "restorers," however, denounced it all as "unchristian," and this anathema has led to the destruction of many valuable memorials and fittings of great historical and artistic interest. Our cathedrals have lost much by the removal of the organ fronts, such as that of Chichester, and of screens like that of Bishop Cosin at Durham.

Of the cathedral building of the English "Renaissance" there is a priceless example in St. Paul's, eloquently representative of the solid culture which in the school of English classic style was based on the still undecayed vigour of the seventeenth-century craftsmanship. This classicality was, however, only the first of the fashions of the "architect": the latest of many is to be seen in Truro Cathedral. But apart from architects' doings nineteenth century art has seldom gained admission into churches. It happens, however, that the newest of our dioceses, that of Birmingham, has adopted a cathedral in which the art of Burne-Jones and William Morris is worthily represented.

The subject, therefore, of Cathedrals in England spreads a wide net, and a considerable latitude of definition must be allowed in an account of their Builders. We know as to the modern Cathedral, such as is now building at Liverpool, who are the originators and givers, who are the architects and designers, and who are the contractors for the labour and material. We call all or either "builders" with distinct ideas of their personalities and as to their responsibility for the work, and can sometimes advisedly spare the name for the artisans who actually build. But in the case of the mediaeval Cathedral such certainty of definition is not possible. The records for the most part neither distinguish, nor indeed mention, the personality of the Cathedral Builder. The following inquiry has therefore to put its questions to the buildings themselves, and get the story of them from their art. So it will be an account less of personalities than of classes, and of aspects and ideas rather than of lives.

# INTRODUCTION

THE arts of the later Middle Ages have been taken too entirely at their architectural worth. They are the masses of great buildings like Lincoln and Canterbury cathedrals which have survived, and we speak often as if this mighty stone-shaping made the whole virtue of the mediaeval artist—as if he got his art by his big windows, by his clustered pillars, in the vaulting of great areas for religious use, and by the towers and pinnacles which accentuated their outlines.

But this view lies on the surface, and its superficiality can be tested. If just the shapes and audacities of the Gothic church-building make its claim on our admiration, then a like renown for its architecture awaits the nineteenth century. For have not, during the last hundred years, the great cathedrals and churches of West Europe been rebuilt with great success of imitation? The naves of Cologne and Bristol cathedrals show for example just the same contrivances of building and the same shapes that the builders of the fourteenth century gave. New Gothic churches with much the scale of the old have become common. How is it that restored copies and magnificent new works do not call forth our devotion? They excite little notice, and even among architects, who should have an interest for it all, admiration of them is rare. And not, I think, because they lack the respectable quality of old age, and the *patina* of a picturesque decay. Many are now well-worn, and as far as moss and crumbling stone can soften their outlines have the texture of antiquity. Yet no lover of art goes a mile out of his way to look at restorations and new Gothic churches. Indeed, as far as the rebuilding of the ancient work concerns artists—and it concerns them sadly—the consensus of opinion is one of disapproval.

Exteriors of cathedrals, refaced as Worcester, Rochester and Chester have been refaced: interiors gone over and refurbished, like those of

Salisbury and Lichfield, are offensive to taste, for the same reason that china reproductions of the Venus of Milo or the oleographs of the Sistine Madonna are offensive. The restored church is taken rather as an eyesore, a work of bad art, with a twang of smug falsity that upsets the stomach of the art-lover. That people should set up puerilities in the seat of a splendid ancient art, rouses the spleen. But let us admit that in the new work of our best architects culture and vigorous handling, as at Truro, blind us to the make-believe—still, anyone who has the serious view of art can only give a passing interest to the show. Look at it as we will, it is a well-contrived property, whose place is in the theatre, in the glare of the limelight, not in the daylight of modern life.

The fact is, it is hard to justify any special admiration for Gothic architecture, if its forms be separated from the great truth of Gothic life, to be critically examined for what they are worth. These window traceries, and these pointed arches, these pinnacles and frillings of cusps and crockets are as abstract architectural forms rather fussy and uncomfortable. Hardly in the detail of their shaping can lie the source of appeal to the imagination, that stirring of the aesthetic sense which a genuine mediaeval church seldom fails to make in us. We conclude that the art of the mediaeval ages was *not* this architectural dress, but something underneath it. The observation and tabulation of its styles and ornaments, of mouldings and arch-shapes can be all very interesting, but they do not explain the profound attraction that Gothic buildings have for temperaments whose creeds of art have been founded on very different models. There are clearly other things which make up our estimate of the mediaeval building. We are conscious in it of expressions too varied, too resourceful, too intimately dependent on the conditions of the work in hand to take it all as the outcome of a detailed designing and mechanical reproduction.

The Gothic shapes can be made to order in perfect correctness, and our designers of churches work systematically and learnedly; but both system and learning were foreign to the ancient workmen. The mediaeval cathedral was the elementary shaping of a natural romance, the direct satisfaction of simple ideals—such as height, breadth and extension; solid mass and slender grace; solemn shade and brilliant colour. Such make the loves of all men, and no learning or special art

gives them to the builder. We can all be Gothic architects on the score of them, but it is the execution that fails us. Our learned designings require a cut-and-dried procedure, a handling of exact machining and dictation, all of which is just opposite to what building got from the mediaeval workman. He started upon very obvious ideals, and quite elementary arrangements, but had the free hand of his material, and so developed a touch in his art which is inimitable except under like conditions. For the very imperfections of his processes—as we judge them by our science, the inexactness of his calculations, the hand-to-mouth necessities, were of the substance of his art. The stress of inadequate resources, the constant effort after the impossible, were just the hindrances and disabilities, whose friction stimulated and made the power to rise above them. They give in mediaeval building to this day the atmosphere that transfigures it, because they express the life of it.

The contrast is therefore complete. In place of the perfection of the modern building, the ancient was always imperfect; in place of our exactness the mediaeval was uncalculated. On the other hand, in place of a feeble heat, there was a great passion of building; and the energy of it still gives to the mediaeval cathedral the suggestion of an organic creation.

Now so foreign is such a suggestion to our habit of church-building, with its mechanical organizations and its nice discriminations of taste, that our professors of architecture are driven to account for the atmosphere of mediaeval art on grounds of some superior power of design. They like to make it all out as the invention of a building school in France, or as the secret of some great masonic guild or class of unrecorded architects. The irregularities and shapely contours of the mediaeval fabric have been lately carefully measured, and gauged by level and plumb-line, and the discovery published as that of the recondite principles of design which underlie the architectural beauty of the middle ages. In my opinion such a discovery is valueless. I have never found any system of aesthetic creation in the proportions of mediaeval building beyond the simplest promptings of the square and the compass. The curvings of wall and the irregular spacings of supports can be seen to be one of two things, either the immediate habit of craftsmanship, or the result of expediency—both varied by the difficulty of building

piecemeal and to suit existing buildings, difficulties that were the constant necessities of church-work in the middle ages.

These things were not of design, but of growth—such as would appear immediately in our own building, if its learning could be forgotten and we had architecture only for our material needs. It would then depend on the strength and character of those needs whether our building developed the genius of mediaeval building, but at any rate the power of growth would show architecture alive. By this power, and the effect of life that is given by it, comes, in my opinion, that mysterious hold, which the great mediaeval works, as if they were natural objects, have on us. It is a commonplace to speak of a great cathedral as a mountain, of a west front as a great cliff, of the ranges of Gothic shafts as the trunks of a forest: but these comparisons come to our lips because this architecture exhibits the progress of experiment, the procession of mighty forces, the constant shaping of many minds and many hearts in the exercise of craftsmanship. Not the scale of the performances, nor any special trick of designing, makes the essence of this interest, for the smallest works and the plainest of the mediaeval builder give the same spaciousness of effect and sense of infinite interest that we get from the sculpture of living form.

And the sense of a living colour must be added to that of living form. Though the original painting of our cathedrals has perished from their walls or is left to us as the merest patches, and faded into dinginess—yet, wherever we find a piece that is real, what a life of colour does it give! It is this realization of colour by the mediaeval workman which, in the eye of the artist, raises him on a plane to which no modern architect reaches. Not only had the building the modelling of the sculptor, the feeling of shade and gradation, which gives the effect of life: it had, too, the painter's glory, the composition of a glowing brightness.

One sees how our arts have lost the sense of treating architecture as a colour-picture: but the shadowy cathedral, and often some sad neglected old church, comparatively untouched by vulgar substitutions, seems aglow with it. Sometimes, indeed, the old painted glass remains as a sample of the brilliance, and we may catch in the hollow of a moulding or the recess of a roof-timber the suggestion of what an art of colour

THE ANGELS WITH THE SEVEN VIALS.
*From an APOCALYPSE of the Fourteenth Century. British Museum*, 15 *D.* II

meant. Here and there by chance preservation a chapel or a tomb gives us the ancient treatment, but usually there are now only the crude grounding paints, which were brought into harmony by glazings and diapers. They are these partial preservations which have deceived us, and indeed modern decorators, under the theory of revival, have seized on such under-tints and sought to restore the ancient painting of buildings by their use. But the crude and unpleasant aspects of this revival-painting were not those of the original effect. Like other " restorations " the efforts in this direction miss the beauty they mimic. We can readily be assured that nothing of crudity found place in the colour schemes of the middle ages—for have we not their illuminated manuscripts in evidence ? For its pure and delicate harmony, a page of a thirteenth or fourteenth century manuscript may compete with the works of the greatest masters of colour that the world has known, and we cannot doubt that the same mastery of brilliant and harmonious tints was shown in the colour scheme of cathedral painting.

I am ready, therefore, to claim for the Cathedral Builders of the middle ages that they were not mere inventors of mechanical forms in building, but also the producers of great pieces of modelled and coloured sculpture, such as would affect the imagination as the arts of painting and sculpture do ; and that this was independent of the many objects of actual sculpture and painting which the fabric of the cathedral or church contained. On all sides were statues and monumental effigies ; walls and windows were bright with painting ; on the altars were reliefs and images of gold and silver. There were bronzes and alabasters, enamels and ivories, jewelled and chased coffers, chalices, illuminated service books, needlework and embroideries. Everywhere were screens and shrines, stallwork and canopies, on which the devices of wrought metal and carved wood were lavished. We know that all this furniture existed, and that such accessories must have added enormously to the art-value of the fabric, which so in every part showed a jewelled excellence as well as the great fabric of its beauty. Churches abroad give us an idea of such furniture. We can see how much St. Mark's, Venice, or the Spanish cathedrals are enriched by the possession of fittings still mostly mediaeval. The views of Westminster Abbey (p. 64) show this much ; but, generally, Cathedrals in England

have only the barest fragments of their ancient furniture; and the little left is too commonly swamped by modern additions.

It is necessary to remind the reader to what lengths the process of church restoring and furnishing has gone in our cathedrals, and how misleading must now be views of mediaeval art which are taken from the existing appearance of many of them. Mechanical structure and meaningless ornament have been in the eyes of the guardians of our churches the right things to put there: but they are not the making of a great art, such as was the art of the Middle Ages. The majority of our mediaeval buildings can no longer be regarded with enthusiasm, and it would be absurd to illustrate them as specimens. The genuine works that remain can scarcely be photographed without the inclusion of some piece of neo-Gothic church-furnishing. In fact, the painter never dreams nowadays of turning to restored churches for his selections and impressions, whereas a hundred years ago it was different. Through all their neglect and coats of whitewash, the venerable vestiges of our ancient arts had virtue enough to inspire many of the English school of water-colourists, and are recorded in the drawings of De Wint, of Constable, of Cotman and Turner. Our illustrations are taken as much as possible from their drawings and from the prints made before the substitutions of the "restorer"—before the modern frenzy had rebuilt exteriors, re-chiselled interiors, stripped off the old plaster, and anished any sense of beauty by the glass, pulpits, screens and lecterns of commercial furnishing.

I do not, however, deny that our cathedrals are still things to see, and that interesting phenomena can be found in them, and it is on the grounds of the interest which still lingers in their history as buildings, that the following short review of the English cathedrals is written. If one cannot help seeing the new facing of the stone-work and the poor quality of church furnishings, yet the mind rejecting their falsity can fix its attention on what is left of the genuine work, and so obtain a knowledge of what was indeed an extraordinary phase in the development of human art.

The broad fact which this study emphasizes is the representative power of a great art like that of mediaeval life. Our present day individualist art gives us a man: we read his art as a personal document—

his revelation of himself. We go on to the next picture or statue or building and read another's personality. So it has been for a century or more: the power of an individual mind has given each artist a vision and a method of imparting this vision to us. The great artist distributes to us a part of himself, and so it is that the personalities of such men as Puvis de Chavannes, Turner and Alfred Stevens interest us. No one but themselves could do what they did.

But if we go back a few hundred years, this dominant personality of the artist becomes less distinct. Passing by the workshops of Rubens and Raffaelle, with their crowd of assistants contributing to the works of the master, we come early in the Renaissance painting to schools of artists in whose works is found little or no individual touch, for all seem endowed with very much the same views of life, and the same power of bringing us into sympathy with it. And behind the Renaissance in the history of mediaeval art personality vanishes entirely. We know that individual hands must have carved each figure of Wells front, a certain mind set out the tracery of each Exeter window, but no distinction lies in the personality, just as no record remains of the name of the artist.

Up to 1400 Italian art alone seems to have developed the personal reputation of artists. We find mediaeval works in Italy signed by the master-masons, with grandiloquent notices, but in the English annals all this has no place even in the sixteenth century. The statues made of Queen Eleanor were not signed, and their execution made no family of sculptors famous, to be called Londoners, in the way that Pisa gave her name to the Pisani. We happen, because the accounts of the Eleanor Trustees have been preserved, to know who were the imagers in the case of the crosses erected to her memory, but there was clearly no idea of special distinction in the record of them. And the still finer masterpieces of the doorway of the Lincoln "Angel Choir"—wrought specially for the gorgeous consecration of it, at which the crowned heads of Europe were present—made no reputation; their sculptors are unnoticed in the story of the pageant.

The king's accounts of 1253 which record, I believe, the actual payment for the beautiful "Annunciation" group of the Westminster chapter-house, just call it "two images done by task work." And when we

inquire as to the building of cathedrals, what man was responsible for the conception of their beauty—a stupendous conception in the modern view of art designing—the answer of the records is equally vague as to personal recognition. The case is well put by Matthew Paris, the historian of the thirteenth century, who writes that it was incumbent to speak of a building or great work as the work of the abbot, " for the glory of the office " which did not permit the praise of anybody else. So we read how such and such a bishop or abbot or officer of the king " did " it or " had it done." Between " fecit " or " fieri fecit " there was no distinction in the mind of the recorder. The actual *makers*, the men who created the art of the buildings, were either quite unobserved, or have casual mention as the " artifices " or " cœmentarii "—whose payment was the only object of the record.

The conclusion is that the power of designing art in mediaeval times was common property, not merely very usual, but what could be demanded of any workman, and was existent in the masses of the people. Beauty was the attribute to be expected of all the work of craft. Every building was a " fair " building, every mason " cunning," every painter " incomparable," every sculptor a " master " : that is to say they all knew their crafts, and that was all that was wanted. The idea of a man being an artist and therefore lifted by a special faculty above the rank of mankind, as a teacher, a prophet, and what not, all this belongs to another age than that which produces the great arts of life, such as was Gothic art. In the middle ages artists, architects, sculptors, painters, were just folk generally, and the credit of their art must not be attributed to extraordinary personalities, but to the life history of the race.

Viewed in this way the study of the least fragment of mediaeval building in its genuine state, or in any well accredited preservation of its facts, is a document full of importance. Its art is not the fancy of a wayward will, but a revelation of human quality in the aggregate. A great building gives us a wide window from which to look away into the middle ages ; its stones tell us almost infinite stories, in which we can listen to the very speech of the days in which they were worked and laid.

And of two classes of men are these tales specially told—of the class that *took* these buildings for their use, and of the class that *gave* them.

There were the people who ordered churches to be built, and the people who did the building. The first, the churchmen, who in the progress of the ecclesiastical tradition dictated on each occasion *what* the church was to be for the purpose of their creed. The second, the executants, who built to this dictation and made the *way* by which the church could be built. One can therefore analyze the interest of the English cathedral in two directions—one can read in its every shape, in its every alteration and adaptation, at each point the faith, the doctrine, the cult, the superstition, or the reformation, that was at work in the religious life of the time. Planned, as I have pointed out, never to any man's fancy of the beautiful, but always as providing for the services of the church—exacting services that brooked of no heresy or chance deviation —the cathedrals could have shown, were they perfectly preserved, the whole course of the religious ideals of the English nation threaded together in one continuous chain. There have, of course, been wide destructions of the evidence, and the restoration of the last 100 years has re-edited the whole with an animus of its own, throwing into the rubbish heap many most valuable links, particularly the works of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The cathedral as we now see it, restored and refurnished, presents too often a romance, forged for the purpose of its picturesqueness, but wanting the details of a real history. Still there remain many fragments that deserve recognition and putting together. The connexion of the parts and conveniences of each great church in view of the religious services of its time have been little followed up, for writers on them generally shirk this part of the story. But I would venture to say that the churchman's part in the art of our great cathedrals, and the significance of his impress upon their development, could be had at first hand by any one who will study them for this purpose.

The mason's part in the story has been, on the other hand, abundantly mapped out and annotated. The stimulus of the Gothic revival urged on investigation, in the idea that a Christian style was to be found in the shapes of Gothic, and that the most perfect, and therefore most Christian, examples of it could be made the models of a new architecture. The object has been to concentrate attention on those forms which could, under the paper designing of an architect's office, be readily

imitated. Arch-shapes, mould-sections, and patterns of tracery, have formed a stock-in-trade to the church-builder, and an aesthetic value has attached to them, not only out of all proportion to their position in the real Gothic art, but as I think very much to the detriment of a real perception of its beauty. Not in the shapes came the expression of mediaeval art, but in the use of them—that use which made them both sculpture and painting. By their reflection of the mason's experiments, by their evidence that he never found the perfect form aesthetically, but was always striving to compass an impossible ideal, the architectural forms of the mediaeval cathedral get their quality. The conscious effort was always towards the simple problem of a great construction : unconsciously it exhibited the conditions under which a great art comes into being.

This wider history to be read into the unrestored walls and sculptures of our cathedrals adds enormously to their value, giving us not only the phases of ritual, and not merely the succession of masonic ambitions, but as well as these the cosmic evolution that is the destiny of all art periods. We can follow the story if we will. We can find the start of a new art from the débris and exhausted traditions of an antecedent ; the religious sanction and first training of it ; the slowly mounting effort of the craftsman to compass the impossible ideals of this training ; the enthusiasm and delight of new ambition bred in him by the effort ; the outburst of style as the power of execution attained to the interpretation of his ambition ; the obscuration of this ideal by the growing masterfulness of dexterity ; the devices of cleverness ; the decadences and inequalities of art which came with the birth of personal instead of communal ambitions ; and then the succession of schools and revivals of art. So the life history of art production can be gathered from the record which a great cathedral puts into our hands.

And not only the phases of this production, but the life of the English people can be studied in the still untouched documents of mediaeval building. Both the churchman's zeal for his faith and the mason's manner of working were shaped by the blood that flowed in their veins, and by the conditions of the land in which they laboured. The Saxon submission, the Norman dominance, the English revival, the acceptances of continental influences and the insular resistances to

foreign dictations, all the outlines of this national history make their expression clear in the shaping of cathedral walls and the details of its sculpture. Still more are reflected therein the qualities of English landscape, the incidents of its climate and the material of its soil. Thus the cathedral church had from all sides its natural and local expressions which the following chapters will treat in further detail.

## CHAPTER I

# The Cathedral Builders of the First Period, 1066-1150

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| St. Albans (crossing) | 1077–1093. |
| Winchester (crypt and transepts) | 1079–1093. |
| Ely (transepts and nave) | 1083–1100. |
| Gloucester (quire and nave) | 1089–1100. |
| Canterbury (crypt and quire) | 1090–1130. |
| Chichester (quire, transepts and nave) | 1091–1123. |
| Durham (quire, transepts and nave) | 1093–1133. |
| Norwich (quire, transepts and nave) | 1095–1119. |
| Peterborough (quire, transepts and nave) | 1117–1143. |
| Rochester (nave) | 1120–1137. |
| Hereford (quire and nave) | 1131–1148. |

At both Chichester and Peterborough the "crossings" are nineteenth century rebuildings.

THE list of the cathedrals of England which still, after the chances of 800 years, offer an impressive record of their first Builders, is a remarkable one. Durham and Norwich remain with their early fabrics almost entire: at Ely and Winchester are great bodies of the original erections after the Conquest: at Chichester and Canterbury are conspicuous specimens of eleventh-century building and of what immediately succeeded: while the many Norman abbey churches, which now have become cathedrals, such as St. Albans, Gloucester, and Peterborough, give us works of the same date and nearly of the same scale.

If one must pick out epithets to label this early architecture by the impressions which it conveys, one would call it in the first place Norman, secondly Benedictine, and thirdly Romanesque. The Norman title it has because this great building in England seems to have resulted directly from the capture of England by the Dukes of Normandy. Therefore, as distinguished from the English arts that followed, it owed its consequence distinctly to the foreign introduction; while, on the

Note.—The lists at the head of each chapter are put as a general indication of the examples that will be discussed. The dates and details are given widely.

other hand, as distinguished from the Continental arts, whether of Normandy, Burgundy or Rhineland, it had a method and vigour of its own which merit the name of Anglo-Norman.

But in another sense the style was independent of nationality: it was in its essence a "Benedictine" art, because the monastic idea of the Benedictine rule stamps Anglo-Norman buildings: and so our cathedrals, in plan and motive, belong to that wide European erection of monastic churches by which the arts of the eleventh century were created. Then in architectural description the style of this art was "Romanesque," for the Benedictine builders had already, ere they were brought to England, taken the distinct step forward away from languid barbarous reminiscences of Roman architecture, had already begun those constructive experiments which were the prelude of Gothic.

Both the positions and plannings of our cathedrals, and the character of their building, can be seen to develop the suggestions of the above epithets. The peculiarities of our churches arise from their Norman erection in England, and the fact makes the starting-point for the individuality of the English art. In England the monastic cathedral came about by the setting of the head of a bishopric in a monastic house, the putting of a bishop's chair in a monk's church, while on the continent in the eleventh century such a combination was practically unknown. A political intention, directly the result of the Norman Conquest, shows itself in the Conqueror's fostering and endowing great Benedictine monasteries as garrisons of his adherents to hold in check an alien population. Thus along the marches of Wales, where unconquered races were still dangerous, a chain of monastic houses—Gloucester, Tewkesbury, Worcester, etc.—formed as it were a wall against the Welsh, and big churches still remain in evidence of their consequence. Similarly the disaffected fen-lands of East Anglia were overlorded by the great abbeys of Peterborough, Crowland, Ely, Bury and Norwich, each a settlement of foreign monks, whose interests were concerned in the maintenance of the Norman supremacy. Westminster Abbey had been, even in Edward the Confessor's reign, an advance settlement of Norman influence. On the Conquest the ancient capitals, the seats of Saxon bishoprics—Canterbury, Rochester and Winchester—were made the seats of strong

Benedictine foundations, and the Norman bishops, mostly kinsmen of the Conqueror, were titular abbots, *ipso facto* lords of the monastic possessions, and had their seats in the abbey churches. The same connexion of bishop and monastery was established at Worcester, Norwich, Durham, and afterwards at Ely and in the house of the Augustinian Canons of Carlisle, while the sees of Lichfield and Wells were attached to the convents of Coventry and Bath respectively. So that out of the fifteen ancient dioceses into which England, from the Conquest to the Dissolution, was divided, only six were free from the domination of a monastic community, whose arrangements controlled or suggested the building of the cathedral.

This peculiarity is responsible for a great deal that shows itself in the style of English Cathedral Builders. There was made by it, for the monastic cathedrals, first of all, the privilege of great bulk, and early erection: so that there was established a prestige for the monastic planning and construction of churches—so firmly, indeed, that not till the Black Death was this ousted from the possession of English style. It was different on the continent, where Abbot and Bishop represented two antagonistic forces, and their churches show their differences. Abbey-churches, as at Cluny or St. Martin's, Tours, were splendid edifices, but bigger still were the great fabrics of thirteenth-century cathedrals raised in the capital centres of a Prince Bishop's state, and generally built *de novo* as a symbol of the City's supremacy. York, London and Lincoln no doubt had their Anglo-Norman cathedrals on the lines of this conception, but by the side of these and of generally greater consequence in the England of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, were monastic cathedrals, as at Winchester, Canterbury and Durham, built for the glory of monks, and scarcely acknowledged by the citizens. Not in capital centres, or cathedral at all, were abbey-churches such as St. Albans, Bury, Peterborough, Gloucester, the Nuns' church of Romsey or the Priory church of Lewes, as big in fabric as many of the secular cathedrals, and as consequential for the progress of architecture. The bulk of this Anglo-Norman monastic architecture resisted any *de novo* rebuilding in the Gothic age: it has withstood to a great extent the assaults of subsequent destructions and come down to our own times witnessing the substance of the original foundations. To this we owe it that the

English cathedral has not generally been the Gothic monument of the thirteenth century, like the famous continental cathedrals—is not, as they are, a uniform structure, shaped in the plenitude of one great designing—but a piecemeal erection of many dates following the fortunes of a monastic establishment. So is the fact of the Norman Conquest of England to be read in our architecture because the policy of the Conqueror set the Benedictine rule in our richest sees.

What this Benedictine rule meant architecturally can be seen in both the plan and style of our English cathedrals: and not merely in the facts of their first erection but in a continuing legacy from it, and shaping their forms in all subsequent rebuildings and imitations up to the Black Death and even beyond.

To take the planning first; the quires of the monks had to be separated from the cathedral naves, with a distinctness that was not of such insistence as to the secular churches of cathedral canons. The latter were clerics, but still part of ordinary life, and were content with a single screen to keep their chancels from the laity. The monks had separated from ordinary life, and a double screen divided their quires from the parts of the church to which the laity had entrance. Our monastic cathedrals had so, in effect, to be two churches, one in front of the other. They developed eastward for the monks with deep transepts for the chapels (double at Canterbury); westwards, beyond the monks' screens, for the people, with naves of an extraordinary length and wide western transepts. Now this length of limb induced considerable departures from the traditional forms of the continental churches. As applied to the cross-plan of the Benedictine evolution, the lengthening of the English ideal created long lateral façades, with corresponding extensions on either side of the central lantern. This allowed for the distinction of the central tower as against the western towers at one end and the tower-like apse at the other. The reader can turn to the view of Canterbury (p. 32), to see what is still the form of the twelfth century, though many of the features are of later rebuildings. The peculiarity can be followed throughout in the system of the English building, and many of the churches illustrated will show, that besides west fronts, the English cathedral had always sideway views of consequence.

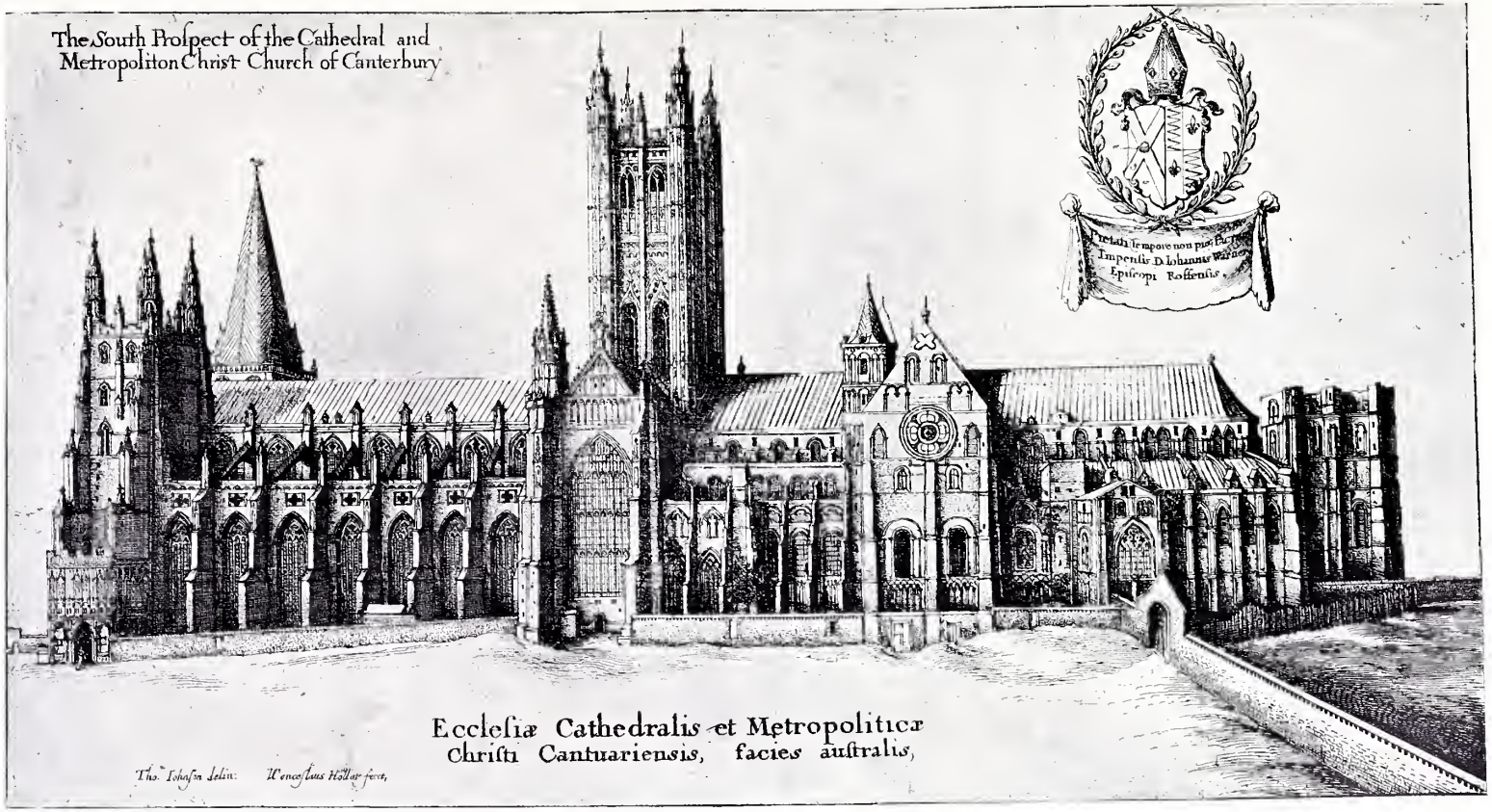
The continental ideal of a cathedral—as of a great hall, with height

and width proportioned to its length—made quite a different thing of the cross-plan; it suppressed all lateral projections of porch and transept, absorbed the central lantern, and in striving to maintain the dignity of the western campaniles raised a great cliff-like front to be the only façade. From all other points of view the French cathedral appears a mound of masonry, crowded on by houses. But the English cathedral, set in a court or close of its own, developed its ideal of a four square castle with dominating towers. And this throughout its history, for not only did our first monastic cathedrals build themselves in separate enclosures with plenty of elbow room, but they established the tradition for English church-building, and our thirteenth-century cathedrals were set in open places. So not only monkish Winchester and Canterbury have limbs of great length, but the secular cathedral of London, with as long a nave to begin with, got a still greater extension on the building of its thirteenth-century quire: and the *de novo* quires of Lincoln and Salisbury, which had no need to be governed by monastic traditions of the twelfth century, were set out as long buildings with double transepts like Canterbury, while in the fourteenth century Lichfield and York have just the same long lateral façades with central and western tower as the monastic Durham of the twelfth.

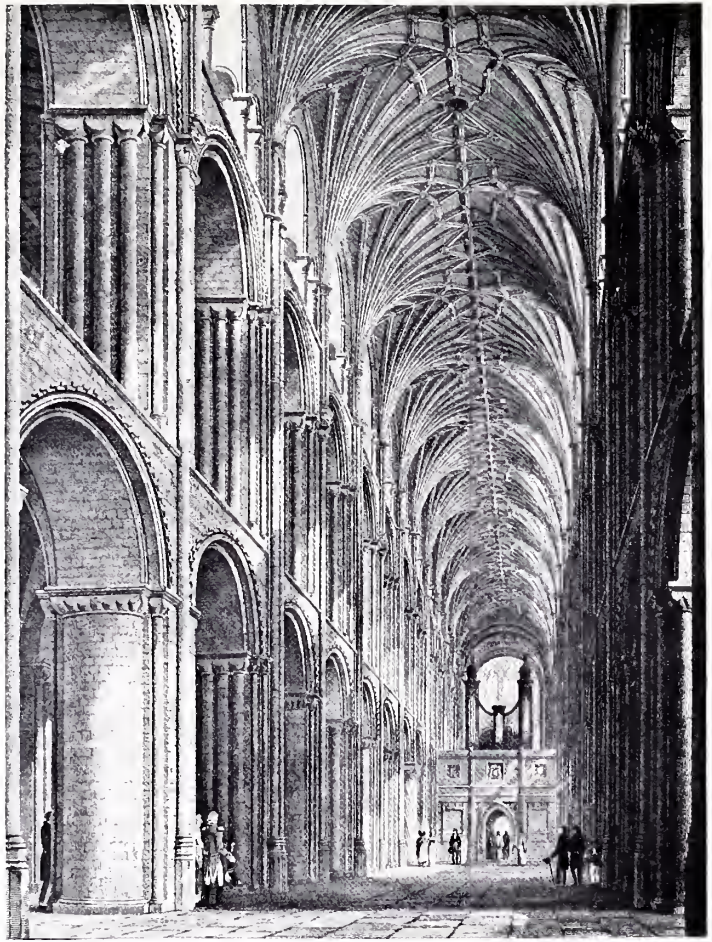
The crypt of the Anglo-Norman planning of cathedrals was another determining feature of their construction, which was fruitful in consequences. This crypt was a relic of that early monasticism which had attracted devotion by allowing the relics of the saints to be inspected and made use of for the benefit of pilgrims. The English cathedrals had to include such conveniences because they were set down in the great places of Saxon worship, where long prescription had established important relics. But underground chambers made cramped spaces for the crowds that flocked to St. Swithin's at Winchester, or St. Oswald's at Worcester, so after the first Norman building relic-worship came up above. Profitable as they were popular, shrine-chapels were added eastward of the monks' quires—as we see was done for St. Thomas at Canterbury—and so the English cathedral got a still further extension. The secular cathedrals, though they lacked at first the Saints, built these eastward chapels for the worship of Our Lady, and her popularity brought them a consequence which competed with that of

monastic saint-worship. Thus schooled in the traditions of Canterbury and Winchester our Cathedral Builders kept always their monastic ideal of planning.

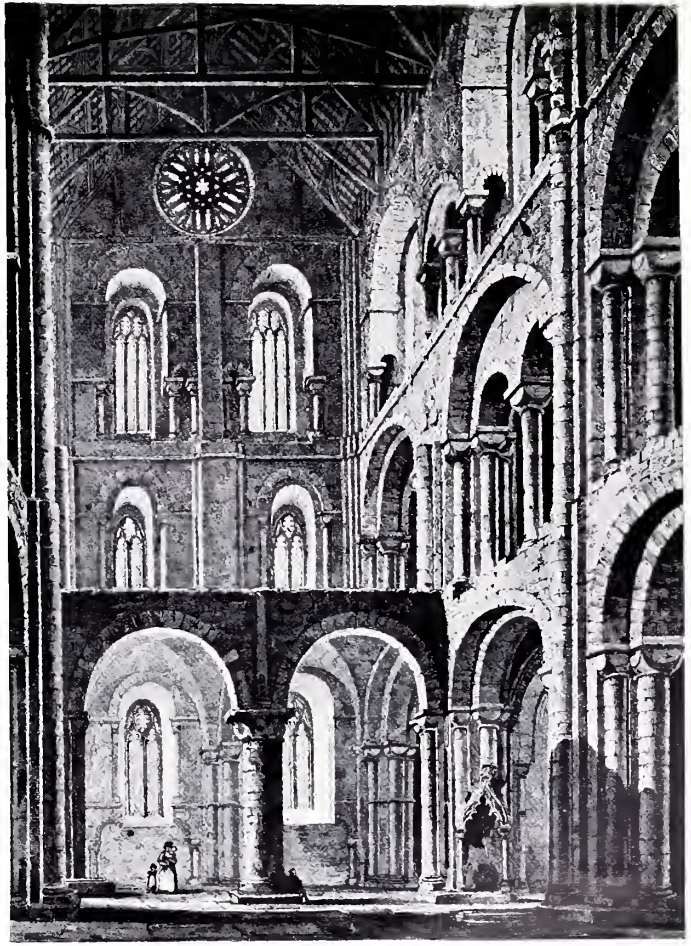
Besides this plan our cathedrals owe to their origin in Benedictine usage the general massiveness of construction and lowness of proportion, which remained in the character of the English architecture throughout. It is the habit to attribute to the peculiarities of the Norman blood the architectural vigour and bulk of their buildings in Normandy, England and Sicily. I think it was environment, rather than heredity, which produced this distinction. It must be remembered that the eleventh century was a building age throughout West Europe: the energy of the race had vent in architecture, and the Normans as the most energetic, exhibiting the spirit of the age to the full, were the most vigorous builders. In Northern France, in England, and in Sicily, they had the means and showed the spirit of conquerors, building castles and churches equally in proof of a commanding destiny. The *furor Normannorum* was in ecclesiastics setting out vast schemes of churches unequalled except perhaps in the Rhine valley. Considering the size of the territory in which they are distributed, the ambition of the Anglo-Norman building is extraordinary. Its masses of masonry defy all competition from what followed in England: for example, one single pier of Durham quire is enough for half the pillars of Westminster Abbey. Such construction went far beyond the supply of masons: a whole population had to be drawn in to build on a scale like this simultaneously all over England. In our earliest cathedrals the unskilled labour of building is in evidence, the skilled craft of chiselling stone is minimized. Plain round surfaces, the simplest, boldest moulding, the easiest problems of vaulting—such as speak of rough tools and little apprenticeship—make the characters of the Norman buildings of Winchester, St. Albans, Chichester, Ely, Norwich, and Durham. It would seem, even, that instead of waiting for the chisel, the rough-dressed blocks were often put in place, and then worked on afterwards. Over all came a coat of thin plaster, on which the painters, ecclesiastics trained in the painting schools of the monasteries, traced and coloured the gorgeous distemper decorations and elaborate figure pieces, the relics of which are visible wherever an original Romanesque stone remains


The South Prospect of the Cathedral and
Metropoliton Christ Church of Canterbury
Ecclesiæ Cathedralis et Metropoliticæ
Christi Cantuariensis, facies australis,
Tho. Johnson delin: Wenceslaus Hollar fecit,

1. Canterbury Cathedral, from the South. *From the engraving by W. Hollar.*



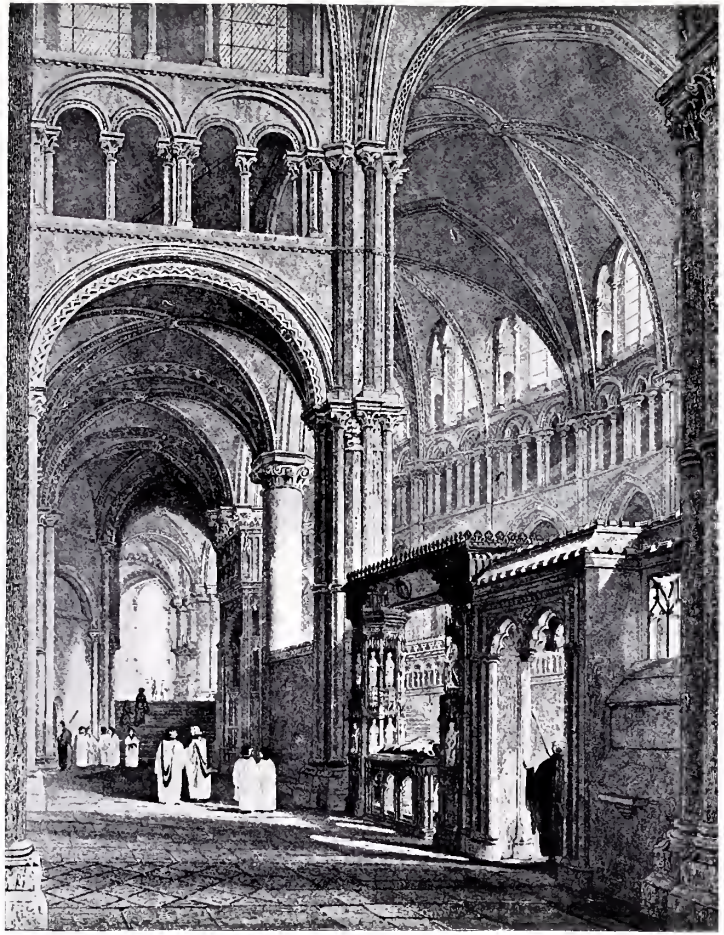
2. Norwich Cathedral, the Nave. *From an engraving by H. le Keux, after a drawing by F. Mackenzie.*



3. Winchester Cathedral, the North Transept. *From an engraving by R. Sands after a drawing by Edward Blore.*

4. Durham Cathedral. *From a drawing by J. S. Cotman. British Museum.*

5. Durham Cathedral, from the South. *From a drawing by W. Daniell. Victoria and Albert Museum.*



6. Canterbury Cathedral, North Aisle of the Choir. *From an engraving by W. Winkles after a drawing by G. Cattermole.*

7. Oxford Cathedral, the Choir. *From an engraving by B. Winkles after a drawing by R. Garland.*

unstripped. This painting of the twelfth century can be seen in good preservation at Canterbury in the crypt (where a walled-off chapel was opened in 1866), and at Durham by the altar in the Galilee, and there are smaller fragments at St. Albans, Chichester and Winchester, its style just that of the contemporary illuminated MSS., like the great Bible of Winchester. In numbers of small parish churches, when stripped for "restoration," whole series of such twelfth-century paintings have been discovered. They have usually only been found to be immediately destroyed. And our Anglo-Norman cathedrals have in fact come down to us in surfaces of bare rough stone which modern ideas of " restoration " have determined to present as rough and unkempt as possible. But this effect entirely belies the original smoothness, brilliantly coloured, full of sacred story, with its architectural lines simple, its chiselled surfaces rare, but the whole vast in its conception, and solemn in the breadth of its lights and shades. As a spectacle of Western Benedictine culture, developing a monastic Renaissance of Oriental luxury and magnificence with the means at hand, our English cathedrals were as significant as any in their original glory.

The style of the Benedictine architecture was indeed part of that monkish imperialism by which the civilization of Europe was first essayed. There was no misgiving in the heart of the monastic claim to empire : one language, one rule of life, one faith, the same in all nations, stood above the anarchy and ferocity of barbarous warfares. So for some eighty years there appeared an imperial building-art—with a style of masoncraft independent of nationality—and it is difficult to tell from a carving or a scroll whether the specimen is from the Rhine, Lombardy or England. Since German and Rhenish building made the advances of this style in the eleventh century, then Lombardy, Burgundy and Normandy took it further, while finally (c. 1100) the Anglo-Norman building became the chief centre of Romanesque progress, each area can show variations of design, but they are those of age rather than of nationality. The solidarity of the chiselling craft throughout West Europe from 1050 to 1130 is like that of the cloister-painting, the expression of the Benedictine supremacy.

But starting level the application of this craft in each area developed indigenous practices and traits. For example, the Anglo-Norman

building of cathedrals exhibits not only the ideas of conquerors and the dictation of Benedictine monks, but it shows itself also the work of English Builders. One or two points may be mentioned. Our Anglo-Norman work is often reproached for bad building on the ground that its towers frequently fell or had to be strengthened and propped up in after times. The vast ambitions of the Norman prelates outran the supply of skilled labour at command. Worked on Roman tradition, Anglo-Norman walls were a core of rubble faced with square stones, and under the stress of towers and spires—often not originally contemplated—the facings would separate from the core and disintegration result. But the masons advancing in skill proceeded to remedy this defect by the device of arcades set on the face of the wall, which with their covering strings made bonds, tying them to the interior core. Whether the idea of this was imported from Lombardy or not, its unusual development in English work (c. 1130) was a step in the scientific building of stone work, and multiplied arcadings because specially characteristic of our after styles.

Another significant indication of English Builders is to be seen as to the stone-vaulting—both in its general absence from the early great naves of the English abbeys, and then in the manner of its introduction therein. The habit of wood construction, for which England had splendid material in its oak forests, no doubt induced wood roofings in churches where abroad they had stone vaults. Also, perhaps, that scarcity of stone-cutters, which has been already commented on, may have led to timber ceilings in some cases where stone had been designed, but it was not found convenient immediately to put vaults. At any rate the naves of the early Anglo-Norman churches were not generally vaulted in stone as the aisles were, but had timber roofings and boarded ceilings such as we see them now at Peterborough and restored at Ely.

The habit of massive tie-beams upon which roof and ceiling depended determined the spans of the English naves as generally narrower than those abroad since for a width of thirty feet only could baulks of English oak be easily obtained. Then these tie-beams influenced both the ideals and construction of the subsequent ceilings. In the first place, since the stone-vault when it came had to be got underneath the girders, its crown was kept level—a peculiarity which from the first distinguishes

the English Gothic vault, and was the elementary factor in the whole subsequent development, for this made its ideals from first to last something different from those of the continental vaultings of great naves. The latter were designed from the ground, with an exactly graduated curvature and a domed hollowness, and only covered from the weather by a roof of slender scantlings compared with the massive English construction.

Again, it is possible that the early rib-vaultings of Anglo-Norman art may have come about thus. The Roman vaults required until they were set an elaborate wood-mould or centreing, the construction of which, though it was only of temporary employment, might be as costly as the actual permanent masonry put upon it. In its construction stout ribs of wood were necessary to bear up the cradles on which the vault material was to come. Now the method of ribbed vaulting in stone is just a carrying out in permanent material of that which the wood construction of such centreings did as a means to an end. Some of the earliest ribbed stone vaults in Europe are reckoned to be those of Durham cathedral, whose builders had quarries giving stone of great length and block. It seems to me that with slabs of such stone at hand for ambitious constructions the habit of the wood centreing would suggest a parallel employment to masonry. Arched ribs of grit stone, for which comparatively little centreing would be necessary might in such a locality be actually of cheaper, easier erection than the massive wood-framings that for a high vault of rubble had to be lifted a great height. And the ribs once built—transverse and diagonal—the fillings between them would need but light assistance from centreings to hold them till they were secure by being keyed. Moreover, such an origin or rather suggestion for rib-vaulting would show it applicable to the oblong compartment for which the earliest English vaultings use it, whereas the domical origins of the rib-vault confine it to the square. But whether or no our carpentry supplied the suggestion, the subsequent course of the English vaulting was distinctly on the lines of decreasing as much as possible the waste of centreing. To this end came the increase of the ribs in English vaulting and its curvatures brought low down so that centreing might be saved.

It can be noted, too, how as the successors of a wood roof English

vaultings favour the ideas of long perspectives, and think little of the effect of the domed compartment. The accent of the English wall is not in its bay-divisions, but in its function of a continuous enclosure—it is stamped with the feeling of solid length, not of narrow verticality. It will be seen how in English cathedrals the traditional stories of Romanesque construction—the main arcade, the triforium and the clerestory, remain as such despite the Gothic dress of details. So that from first to last in all these traditions—in the massive construction, the low broad proportion, and the long roof-perspective—there can be read how monastic building gave England her first cathedrals.

One last point of development has to be noted in our sketch of this art. In the course of fifty years of cathedral building the chisel grew to dexterity, and the number and skill of the masons increased, so that (c. 1130) they had become a settled class of trained craftsmen, employed by ecclesiastics, and carrying out their orders. Under this dispensation the flat painting of the early Benedictine school was superseded by a decorative carving, painted too, but wrought first by the cutting of a skilful sculptor. The plain surfaces and simple contours of the earlier art, give place to an almost Indian richness of sculptured ornament.[1] The nave and original chapter-house of Rochester, and Bishop Bethune's building at Hereford, are the best examples, left in cathedrals, of this later phase of English Romanesque; to understand its expression we must turn to the ruins of the Cluniac church of Castle Acre in Norfolk, or to parish churches such as St. Peter's at Northampton, Adel in Yorkshire, Iffley in Oxfordshire, Barfreston in Kent, Kilpeck and Shobdon in Herefordshire. These show a wealth of mason's cutting in the zig-zags, frets and beak-heads of their elaborate doorways, and in two districts, one the south-east of England, the other the Severn Valley, the figure-carvings in capitals and reliefs and the sculpture of tympana are remarkable. But at first this was still in the service of Romanesque tradition—chiefly at the beck of the luxuriant motives of the Benedictine and Cluniac decoration. Our next section will deal with the emancipation of the mason, the turning of him from a decorator into a constructive artist.

[1] The numerous fragments of capitals and mouldings dug up on monastic sites show how we have lost an architecture of remarkable elaboration by the destruction of conventual buildings. What is left at Canterbury gives something of it.

## CHAPTER II

# The Cathedral Builders of the Second Period, 1160—1207

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| Ely (west bays of nave, west transept) | 1174–1189 |
| Peterborough (west bays of nave) | 1177–1193 |
| Ripon (quire, transepts) | 1154–1181 |
| York (crypt) | 1154–1181 |
| Worcester (chapter-house and west bays of nave) | 1140–1170 |
| Oxford (quire, transepts, nave) | 1141–1180 |
| Wells (quire, transepts, nave) | 1174–1191 |
| Canterbury (quire and east chapels) | 1175–1184 |
| Chichester (chapels, quire, nave) | 1147–1204 |
| Winchester (chapels) | 1195–1204 |
| Rochester (quire) | 1190–1227 |
| Ely (Galilee) | 1198–1215 |

ONE might label this second period to distinguish it from the first as Angevin instead of Norman ; as of the reformed orders instead of the Benedictine ; and the style of its builders as no longer Romanesque but transitional to Gothic. But the epithets cannot be applied to cathedral building in the same wholesale way. In the first place the native duchy of the Angevin Henry II was not so consequential to the building of English cathedrals, as had been the Normandy of the Conqueror to the Anglo-Norman style. The actual connexion of Anjou with England has little reflection in the ways of our builders : what was of consequence was the wide sovereignty of the English Kings and their established supremacy in Western Europe. There resulted a free disposal of ecclesiastic appointments to all nationalities. Bishops and Abbots passed from England to the Continent, and back again, as if in one country. In the latter half of the twelfth century it is common to find born Englishmen in prominent positions abroad, and

it is significant that our one English Pope, Nicolas Brakespear, was of this date.[1]

This interchange of ecclesiastics, and the resulting close connexions throughout Europe of those who were the disposers and managers of architecture, should have made similar close connexions for the building style; and for a time we observe something of the sort in the first half of the twelfth century. Therefore one might have expected the same solidarity in the beginnings of Gothic and that the path of the English Transition would have been that of the continent. As far as regards the broad ideals of church architecture and a like forwardness of development, this is the case. The second half of the twelfth century, not in one or two but in many places in the West of Europe, was the nurse of Gothic architecture. It is to be observed, however, that a similarity of building style did not follow the general likeness of the material it worked on, or of the effort which animated it. Not only were there broad differences distinguishing development in France and England, but in each of these countries several districts made for themselves different starts in the direction of Gothic.

The reason of this was, what I touched on in the concluding sentences of the last chapter: the monastic direction of building was losing the consequence it had held for some three centuries. Its demand for skilled masonry had now created a craft of masons not directly amenable to ecclesiastical discipline, and these began to take the matter out of the hands of the church. There was so the beginning of a movement which did not reach its full momentum till the Black Death. In his education of the mason the ecclesiastic was gradually parting with that control of the form and spirit of art, which in the early times had been part of his missionary propaganda. Thus, though ecclesiastics in the latter part of the twelfth century were cosmopolitan, the craft of the mason was his own in each place—and so at first not only native to each country, but local to each district.

At no time in the mediaeval period were there such extraordinary differences of technique and ability as in the contemporary arts of the last half of the twelfth century. To take an example from the develop-

[1] See the author's *History of Gothic Art in England*, for lists of foreigners holding appointments in England and *vice versâ*.

ments of figure-sculpture. At Vezeley and Autun in Burgundy; at Chartres in middle France; at Arles in Provence; at St. Iago di Compostella in Spain; at Wechselberg and Freiburg in Saxony; so in England at Malmesbury, Glastonbury and Wells, native sculptors in each worked a remarkable evolution of Gothic feeling founded on the same groundwork of Eastern tradition, but with differences of technique and inspiration which show independence. And just such diversities developed in the Romanesque schools of construction in Burgundy, in Normandy, in Flanders, and North France, on the Rhine and in Saxony—each body of builders making Gothic of their own or rather taking steps in that direction. The various districts of England showed in their birth of Transitional style similar independences. The east, the north, the west and the south-east all went their ways separately. It is to be noted that in none of them does the style of Angers, the native home of the Angevin kings count for much; and that where, as in the south-east of England, continental influences can be recognized—they are from Flanders and Normandy, not from Anjou.

The peculiarities, therefore, of these local manners in the north, east, south and west respectively, which our English cathedrals of the Transition exhibit, are to be looked for in the circumstances of the masons. It can be seen that the building of churches developed habits founded on the stones of the district, or of the places from which stone could be easily imported; and that, moreover, the employment of the masons in the service of the various religious communities as these happened to be locally placed made variations in the crafts. For example, the Benedictines of Durham, of Peterborough, and of Ely, had bodies of masons engaged in the erection of their vast cathedrals for long periods, and such a staff in the completion of the great abbey-churches carved and built, not only conformably to the beginnings of them, but with a tradition of masoncraft that was antagonistic to the new ideas. Thus after 1150 a belated Romanesque was still built in Ely and Peterborough naves and Durham Galilee, because a supremacy for Benedictine architecture had been established by the great foundations of the Conqueror.

Elsewhere new orders of monks were building too. The first of these, the Cluniac, was remarkable in its native Burgundy for its

sumptuous architecture and its schools of sculpture. The rich carving of the second period of English Romanesque probably in England owed much to the Cluniac arts. From the premier Cluniac house of England, Lewes, there seems to have spread the decorative ideas which cover the doorways of Kent and Sussex.[2] Around Much Wenlock (also a great Cluniac priory) is to be found a western school of sculpture; and Castle Acre in Norfolk, another church of the same order, is remarkable for the richness of its carved arch-moulds. So far the Benedictine reformation seems to have only accentuated the luxuries of architecture. But a different architectural motive comes with the next important reformation of the Benedictine rule, that of St. Bernard, who determinately expressed an austerity obnoxious to the luxurious building of the Cluniacs. Founded at Citeaux, and established at Clairvaux and Pontigny in Burgundy, the Cistercian reformation had daughter-houses to the number of many hundreds before the end of the twelfth century, sending its colonies into all parts of Western Europe. Their early buildings show a simple planning of the quire, and a severity of construction that agrees with their profession and contrasts with the apses and rich ornament of the Cluniacs.

Now this appearance of Cistercian simplicity, while it seems to alter little abroad, changes in England after 1160. There is still the same rejection of the redundant ornament of the latest Romanesque—of the zig-zags, beak-heads, chevrons and arabesques, and all the figure-carving of the late rich Norman style—but there has come in its place, as far as masoncraft is concerned, equal elaborations and in size and circumstance a still more stately if less massive architecture than that of the Benedictines. This is particularly the case in the north of England in the Cistercian abbeys of Yorkshire, such as Fountains, Roche, Kirkstall, By land, Jervaulx and Rievaulx, and also in Furness, where there are ruined churches and refectories that by the boldness of their style excite our admiration and are object-lessons in the evolution of Gothic. It has been accordingly asserted, on the evidence of this English building, that the Cistercian rule had the best claim to be taken as the inventors

[2] See the doors at Barfreston, Patrixbourn, Rye, Cliffe; also the fonts at St. Nicolas, Brighton, and at Darenth; the carvings of Canterbury crypt, and those at Rochester of Ernulf's chapter-house.

of Gothic and that their mother-churches, Citeaux, Clairvaux and Pontigny, first made the early Gothic builders and then dispersed them throughout Europe. One can only touch on this question, but as far as our English building is concerned, the contention that its Gothic style was of Cistercian origin is a difficult one. If the uniformity of planning which with certain set variations is observable in all Cistercian churches meant the despatch of masons from the Burgundian mother-home to build for the daughters: if in this way the early Gothic style of Burgundy was introduced into England with every Cistercian house that was founded—we should at once recognize the uniformity of all Cistercian work built at the same date. For example, Kirkstall in Yorkshire, Ford in Dorset and Buildwas in Shropshire, should on this supposition show a like building of piers, vaultings and arch-moulds. But as a fact they do not, Kirkstall is thoroughly of the north, and Ford and Buildwas differ from it and one another, and each display, as far as Gothic style is concerned, just the same advance as certain non-Cistercian building at their side. It is clear that Burgundian masons would not be likely to have supplied a different Gothic simultaneously to three parts of England. The conclusion is that the Cistercians may sometimes have introduced foreign masons as labouring brothers (conversi), for so much the narthex and aisles at Fountains would suggest; but that as a rule, they had to fall back on the local labour, so that the English development of Gothic grew up in the needs of Cistercian building at the hands of English masons, and not by introduction from abroad.

For indeed in the houses of Augustinian and Premonstratensian canons, whose foundations, like the Cistercian, were becoming popular as reformed institutions eschewing the laxity and pride of the Benedictines, the Gothic advances of style are of just as apparent earliness and of the same kinds as in the Cistercian building. Moreover, the same features occur in the smaller Benedictine houses of the north of England and in the churches and chapels which the Bishops founded. The masoncraft of early Gothic experiment did not therefore depend on Citeaux, but was that of the district. The differences of the monastic order did not affect it, except where, as in the case of the old established Benedictines, such as Durham or Selby, the monastic staff of masons

had been trained in Romanesque, were conservative of its round arches and lavish ornaments, and only slowly got recruited from the outside craft of experimenters in Gothic. Where the new blood of Gothic does come into a Benedictine building as in the Yorkshire nave of Selby, the attempts to match the ancient solidity with Gothic constructions lead to some strange effects which it is worth going to Selby to observe. Where, however, as in the east of England, the output of Gothic was small, the naves of the Benedictine abbey churches were still in the hands of the Romanesque masons up to 1175 and later. Their west transepts keep to the Anglo-Norman style, and their west fronts and towers yield only to the extent of a pointed arch or two in their storied arcades. Splendidly massive is this last word of monastic Romanesque as seen from the Dean's garden at Ely. But what a survival it was can be judged by turning the corner and passing into the Galilee, the work of scarcely twenty years later, but delicate and attenuated with the triumphant dexterity of a Gothic masoncraft introduced for Bishop Eustace's pleasure.

Only so far, then, can the transition period of English Gothic be called that of the "reformed" monasticism, in that the evidence of its progressions can be best traced in their buildings, while it was the result of that progress which was accepted wholesale by the Benedictines when they had occasion for it as at Selby, at Ely, at Canterbury and Glastonbury. In a secondary sense Gothic is of the new orders—in that its plainness and constructive ingenuity were economies congenial to the necessities of communities of less resources and less established than were the Benedictines of the great abbeys. The experiments of building with thinner walls and loftier vaults excited the imagination of the mason and took him on the path in which, as the new foundations got richer, he was able to make good progress.

The north of England, in which the new foundations were especially numerous, had, in the use of a hard sandstone, an excellent material for developing the rather stern and trenchant qualities of the Cistercian and Augustinian style. The history of our English style has suffered by most of these reformed churches having been ruined at the Dissolution. Henry VIII founded no cathedrals in the northern Cistercian and Augustinian churches. Of our existing cathedrals, York shows

a crypt of this building, which had been a substantial one under Archbishop Roger, and Ripon, under the same prelate, part of a quire and transept.

There was another district of England which supplied the same class of conditions for the development of Gothic and has had more remains of it preserved. Along the Welsh borders outside the fringe of the Conqueror's monasteries, and in Wales itself, came in the twelfth century many foundations of Cistercian and Augustinian houses—so that here, too, was opportunity for new building in which style might make progress. At Abbey Dore—the one Cistercian quire remaining roofed in England—in the ruins of Margam, Neath, Strata Florida, Valle Crucis, and Cwmhir, and especially in the Augustinian Llanthony and the eastern chapels of Hereford cathedral, can be found the steps of a fresh and picturesque advance to Gothic working in the masoncraft of the soft big sandstones of the west. Its expression is a very different one from that of the northern art, less austere and particularly exhibiting a delightful leaf carving.

The origin of this border art, though its practice was largely Cistercian, can be traced to the Benedictine monastic cathedral of Worcester, and the story is worth following in its proof of how a local independence arose in Gothic style. The staff of masons on the Cathedral at Worcester evolved a type of Romanesque that was different from that of eastern and southern England. They invented c. 1140 a remarkable system of construction in the circular chapter-house, and then developed the principles of it in the bays of the nave, at the west end of the Cathedral, particularly introducing the pointed arch, a use of triple wall piers and a scientific system of vaulting. At Much Wenlock[3] the same masons appear, and their work is in St. Mary's, Shrewsbury, where, besides the constructional facility, a considerable sculptural dexterity appears, practised no doubt in the Cluniac school of carving. This advanced science of construction and wealth of sculptural decoration are what appear in the Cistercian Abbeys of Wales. Their vaultings are of Worcester type and the round (or rather polygonal) chapter-house of the Worcester Monks is repeated at Margam and Abbey Dore. The triple shafting and rich capitals of Shrews-

[3] A large part of this Cluniac church (now in ruins) was, however, after 1200.

bury are at Abbey Dore, Neath and Cwmhir,[4] and coming into general use in the last quarter of the twelfth century in South Wales appear in the cathedral churches of Hereford, St. David's and Llandaff.

One can, however, spread this school of masons still wider. Besides the Worcester Romanesque building, there had been another influence apparent in the abbey buildings of the west of England. The lofty round piers of the Gloucester and Tewkesbury naves suggest kinship rather with Rhenish ideas than those of Normandy, and a similar grand order of arcade-pillars appears in some of the Augustinian churches of the north of England, at as Jedburgh and Lanercost, as well as in the nuns' church of Romsey. Whether drawn from one source or the other the dawn of Gothic style found this scheme at Oxford in the Augustinian church of St. Frideswide which is now the Cathedral. Our illustration gives the effect produced by tucking the triforium away under the arches of the main arcade. The interest of this building is, first, in the beautiful foliage carving of the arcade capitals, and secondly, because its scheme of bay seems to have been carried to Glastonbury. There the western masoncraft systematised it on a cathedral scale, as can still be seen in the ruin of the abbey-church, whose burning and rebuilding is dated 1184–1190. But mixed with this mid-England evolution of Romanesque, to which the beginnings of Gothic at Malmesbury and Old Sarum had contributed, there is come at Glastonbury the finer constructional evolution of the Welsh Cistercian building. Bristol —the great commercial city of the west of England—must have been the head office, in which the masons of this Gothic were reared and from whence they were dispersed. The Welsh Cathedrals of St. David's and Llandaff, and those over the Irish Sea—the Cathedrals of Christchurch and St. Patrick in Dublin—certainly got their masons from Bristol. And finally bringing all these threads together with an example of the Gothic experiment which stamps the western style as specifically distinct among the Transitional Gothic arts of Europe, we have the Cathedral of Wells—the near neighbour of Bristol and Glastonbury.

There remains in the two lower stories of Wells part of the church

[4] The remarkable carved capitals have now been built into the arcades of Llanidloes Church.

under Reginald, who was bishop from 1174 to 1191. After 1184 his masons carried on the cathedral side by side with those of Glastonbury, but Wells shows considerable advances in Gothic style. At Glastonbury, St. Mary's Chapel retains—as was congenial to Benedictine traditions—entirely round arches : and even the body of the church has a mixture of round with pointed and Romanesque ornament in its arch-moulds. Wells has arches pointed throughout, with multiplied mouldings and a rich school of Gothic sculpture in its capitals. In view of this difference, some controversy has arisen whether we really have in the transepts and nave of Wells the actual building before 1200. I feel that, as regards the two ground-stories of the cathedral wall, there can be no doubt of this. The work of Glastonbury Abbey has the mixture of mid-England style, but if examined in detail, its arches and carvings show the same sections and forms of masoncraft as do the Wells buildings, and though these are differently applied, the same masons may have worked them at both. There are some scraps of evidence in the records of Wells to show that building there of consequence was proceeding about 1180, and it has been acutely reasoned by Mr. St. John Hope that the existing fabric of the Wells Cathedral must have been set out on a new alignment—for the bearings of the Cathedral and its buildings are not those of the town of Wells. The original alignment of the city would have conformed to the anterior building of Bishop Ralph, so there must have been a complete razing to the ground to permit of the present setting out. Now the Bishop Savaric, who succeeded Reginald in 1191, was an absentee, at enmity with his cathedral establishment, and thus the occasions of such a big enterprise as that of completely clearing away an existing Cathedral and setting out a new, were hardly to be found during his episcopate. Under Bishop Jocelyn, who came next, there must have been a similar incapacity, until that Bishop's return from abroad in 1220, when we find he began the great west front in a style which antedates the west bays, which themselves antedate what is to the east of them.[5]

Indeed that large body of western work, whose remarkable phase of transitional Gothic the preceding pages have sketched, can be put

[5] The piers of the quire, and the east chapels of transept were built earliest, and then the crossing and east bays of nave. The vaultings seem a later work.

into no reasonable sequence of masonic progress but by the conclusion that the building of the Cathedral at Wells right up to the west front, was undertaken before the Interdict, 1207. Then the circumstances of the Wells diocese enhance the probability that the bulk of the cathedral was complete before 1190, and this would naturally put the starting of the quire (c. 1175) early in Reginald's episcopate.

The conclusion is that, in Wells Cathedral, we see the forwardness of a local style to be put beside that of Ripon and Canterbury quire : that in the beginning of Gothic art there was no one central evolution, but numerous advances and instances of outlying precocity. They are, I believe, to be found in many directions, and have to be reckoned with by those dogmatists who persist that all the invention of Gothic lay in the Île de France and was dribbled out to English masons from what Abbé Suger built at St. Denis.

The quire of Canterbury Cathedral is for southern English art what Wells is for the western—another document important in its indication of how Gothic style created itself in England, growing up of our building necessities. We have here no uncertainty of date, for the contemporary chronicle of Gervase describes in detail not only the sad burning of the Cathedral in 1174, but every stage of its re-building up to the year 1184—and his account is so accurate and circumstantial that a surveyor might, to-day, measure up and certify to the work of each year. Where so much is misty and controversial as to the events and order of mediaeval building, the firm ground of Canterbury is felt as capable of establishing much. We know that William of Sens, a French mason, presumably employed on the Cathedral of Sens, was selected by the monks out of many "artifices," who in Gervase's words came together, and made the master-mason for the re-building. He promised that he would put up the quire just as before (the monks were proud of their old church) and he worked at it with other masons, directing them, till an accident compelled him to return to France. Thereupon William the Englishman was chosen in his place, and the account of Gervase, shortly after, ceases to be circumstantial in its description of the rest of the re-building.

The anxiety to get distinct origins for Gothic style has found its chance in these incidents so opportunely preserved for our instruction.

All foreign writers, and many English, take them as the principal facts of the English story of architecture, and relate how the French architect who had built the cathedral of Sens introduced the French Gothic, taught the ways of it to his subordinate, who then handed on the secrets to the rest of the English. However, Gervase's narrative seems to me not to bear so big an interpretation. In the first place French Gothic style had by no means a triumphant introduction in the hands of the "artifex" William of Sens—who may or may not have had to do with Sens cathedral building. At any rate he neither professed nor was desired to introduce anything brand new from Sens, but proposed to build up again the Anglo-Norman of the old quire. As a fact, we find in his work at Canterbury not quite the character of the Cathedral of Sens, and only a half-hearted attempt at the Gothic, which the French masons had achieved in his native place. Secondly, the statement that William the Englishman was a pupil of the Frenchman is a misreading of Gervase, whose narrative very clearly shuts out the possibility that the assistant monk (most likely Gervase himself) who had the clerkly office in charge of the masons, could possibly be the mason who succeeded as Master. Finally, the architecture of Canterbury as we see it shows us exactly what is French and what is not—and the latter to be no copying of the French, but an English style, a grown-up Gothic by the side of its French brother.

One can readily reckon up the French features of the first mason's superintendence. His initiation of the mason-craft is French in its setting out and the leading lines of its construction. French too in the detail of the carved capitals of the choir proper, which the Master may have worked himself. These are, moreover, "French," in the strict sense that we should use the word architecturally, for their forms are of the local style of the Île de France that in its magnificent development was to be the grand Gothic of the continent. But with it and around it at Canterbury, then succeeding it and blotting out its character, was the English work of the south-eastern masons, who, despite their French master, were the predominant builders of Canterbury quire.

Now this south-eastern English style had decided continental proclivities, but then these are not those of the Île de France especially. Nearest to the Continent, it shows its position by exhibiting broader

windows, as compared with the English styles of the north and west; also by its types of capitals and vaultings, which have much of the style of Normandy and Picardy. Kent is not a county where a good free-stone is to be got from the ground, so Cathedral Builders had to import it. From Caen in Normandy all through the Middle Ages was the commercial importation of a free-stone[6] to our eastern and southern shores, and this was, for ease of carriage, in small blocks—a fact which alone would make the Île de France style difficult to our south-eastern builders. But while as long as England and Normandy made one country, there was one style in both as far as Caen-stone was concerned, there grew up with this another use in south-eastern England. The black marbles of Belgium were coming here in the twelfth century carved for fonts and memorial slabs, until at its end the marble from south Dorset, called Purbeck, superseded them. There had been, in the triangle of country twixt France and the Rhine, a building with monoliths of the Belgian marble in detached piers set in the angles of the white stone. That the Purbeck masons, copying the Flemish in one thing, did so in the other, seems to me likely. At any rate, about 1170 appears a trade of Purbeck-marble shafts which gave to English building just what the Flemish workshops did to the churches of the Meuse and of Picardy. Now Canterbury quire—particularly that part of it which Gervase's narrative declares to have been entirely under the mastership of the Englishman—exhibits, as well developed, this Caen and Purbeck art. Its detached shaftings, its open arcades, its strings of dark Purbeck marble (with their narrow mouldings so significant of a thin-bedded marble) its strong ribbed Purbeck foliage—and then on the Caen-stone side, the chevrons and crockets of the art of Normandy, make between them a peculiar mixture, which must be called thoroughly English, since nowhere abroad do the same combinations occur. To call this art "French," because Flanders sent its marbles to Picardy and because Normandy thirty years after became French, seems to me a solecism, that a properly taught schoolboy might avoid. At Canterbury, and then at Chichester, we can trace this South-eastern manner of the

[6] The Anglo-Norman builders seem usually to have got hold of the quarries, opened by the Romans, of coarse hard stone. The softer easily chiselled Caen stone and its English equivalents came into use about the middle of the twelfth century.

English masons developing into the style which we call Early English. The part which the Purbeck art had in this evolution is most evident. The turned shafts of marble induced (as indeed we can see at Canterbury) the round-planned abacus and the moulded capital, and these in turn led to changes in the arch-moulds. The multiplied mouldings of the English arches, their labels, their dog-tooth enrichments, their use in arcadings, all grow from the conditions of this south-eastern craft —from the fact that the masons of Kent and Sussex had, by reason of the lack of native stone on the spot, to get their material from over sea, and from two quarters. Then the craft of Canterbury and Chichester became that of the London "marblers" and "white-stone cutters."[7] The Caen-stone and Purbeck style spread to all parts of England c. 1200. It was the grand architecture which Bishop Lucy built in his chapels at Winchester and Bishop Eustace in his Ely Galilee and was passed on to the Lincoln, Rochester and Salisbury Builders. Its fashions were immediately imitated in the local productions. At Chichester Sussex marble mixes with the Purbeck; Forest marble copies it at Lincoln and Sherborne, lias at Wells and Exeter, Frosterley marble at Fountains and Durham, and a local limestone at Furness; but the local uses adopted always the ways of the model southern art. The details, too, of the Caen-stone workers went along with those of the Purbeck: in the Ely Galilee the Romanesque decorations were extinguished by them: at Fountains the north-country Cistercian style bit by bit ran into the mould, and at Worcester and Wells the western masoncraft forgot its original triple shafts and the varied foliage of its capitals.

[7] The "marmorarii" and "alborum cissores" are separated as distinct crafts in the Westminster accounts of 1253.

## CHAPTER III

# The Cathedral Builders of the Third Period, 1207-1250.

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|---|---|
| Lincoln (quire, transepts, nave) | 1192–1253 |
| Worcester (quire) | 1203–1236 |
| Salisbury (quire, transepts, nave) | 1220–1258 |
| Peterborough (west front) | 1220–1237 |
| Wells (west front) | 1220–1242 |
| York (transepts) | 1227–1260 |
| Ely (chapels) | 1235–1252 |
| Southwell (quire) | 1235–1280 |
| Durham (nine altars) | 1237–1280 |

THE thirteenth century was that of the great French Gothic building of Cathedrals—great not only by the majesty of their bulk, but as much in the masterful creativeness of their style. A mastery elevated this style in the Île de France so conspicuously that it was spread abroad in Western Europe as the one right way of building churches. So a thirteenth century German chronicler speaks of it as "opus Francigenum." It was carried all over France and displaced the local ways of building: built "French" Cathedrals in Spain, in Germany, in Cyprus and in Sweden. And the details of its masoncraft became the common property of European architecture.

The same century was one of Cathedral Builders in England, but its special claim to such a title was not so clear. Rather for England the *twelfth* should be called their chief century, seeing that of our dozen first-class bishops' churches as many as six are conspicuous by the prominence of their twelfth-century building. Only in two, Lincoln and Salisbury, was the whole creation that of the thirteenth century, as in the many great cathedrals of France and their copies in Spain and Germany. There are, no doubt, conspicuous additions to many of our cathedrals which give the character of our thirteenth-

century Gothic style—the west fronts of Peterborough and Wells, the quires of Worcester, Rochester, Ely and Southwell, the transepts of York and the "Nine Altars" of Durham. But our greatest thirteenth century quire—that of old St. Paul's—has entirely disappeared, and the non-cathedral quires such as Beverley and Westminster, are needed to make up the tale of our greater thirteenth-century building.

The English work, though clearly smaller and of less consequence than the French, is still of importance in the history of Gothic art, for the reason that it is a separate species of it; a crystallization of style, independent of the French crystallization. It was not a cutting or layer from the French plant, but a seedling of a similar growth, on a smaller scale, but rather anticipating than echoing many of the features of the French creation. In this separateness of style our English art of the thirteenth century has its history on the lines of the Italian rather than of the German or Spanish architecture of cathedrals.

One may therefore describe the third period of our Builders as essentially *insular*, i.e. native of the English island. The expulsion of the English kings from their continental possessions isolated for a time the English masons, and kept their art distinct, when their Norman brethren—on the conquest of Normandy by Philip Augustus—absorbed the "French" style from the Île de France. The English Builders being unaffected from France, founded their experiments on the peculiarities of that south-eastern craft of marblers and white-stone cutters which was described in my last chapter. Now this masoncraft had the prestige of building in the centres of political power, Winchester and London, and the social influence which spread abroad and made it the grand style of our Cathedral building was that of the English Bishops. The power of such ecclesiastics had been evident in John's reign, and had been exercised in the current of the national life of England. The English Church, when it triumphed over the usurpations of John, developed such prelates as Bishop Jocelyn of Wells, Bishop Grosseteste of Lincoln, and Bishop Poore of Salisbury and Durham. And associated with these names were buildings to Cathedrals, Bishop Jocelyn's completion of Wells, Bishop Grosseteste's completion of Lincoln Cathedral, and Bishop Poore's foundation of Salisbury, and the "Nine Altars" at Durham. In these works the "Early English" style, as it has

come to be called, showed itself practically uniform throughout England. It was built, in quires and transepts, at Rochester, at Worcester, and at Ely, where, though in monastic cathedrals, in each case we can still label it as *episcopal*. For these additions appear in the above churches as superseding the Benedictine arrangements of their first planning, and as adding features of popular expression, as if the monk was yielding his ideal to that of secular churchmanship. For example, the two secular cathedrals Lincoln and Salisbury, though they still follow the general monastic plans, have made differences in it. The eleventh century had built, first of all and centrally, a monk's quire under the crossing; secondly, a people's nave to the west; thirdly, a saint's shrine to the east. This threefold division is adopted, but modified in the cathedral as now arranged for secular canons. The people's part of the Church is enlarged and given the whole nave and transept; the quire of the canons comes beyond the crossing, and is given a transept of its own; and then behind the screen of the great altar is stretched out the Lady Chapel as the third compartment. This last addition is significant: the importance given to the chapel of Our Lady is the ritual development which stamps our thirteenth-century Cathedrals, both as episcopal and markedly English. The Bishops were zealous to make Our Lady the popular deity in England, and her worship thus has the chief place in their secular building; the square-ended sanctuary of national usage is put behind the Romanesque apse and finally obliterates it.

So in the cathedrals at Winchester, Rochester, Worcester, Ely and Durham, the apsed plan yielded to the necessity of square-ended eastern additions. But in the great abbey-churches, not in episcopal hands, there was a more tardy submission to the popular demands—Peterborough and Tewkesbury, for example, tried to preserve their apses by putting Lady Chapels at the side, but all the same had finally to square themselves to the east. The insistent influences upon Cathedral Builders can be read in the progressive advance of the square-end in cathedral-planning. In twelfth-century cathedrals, as those of Old Sarum, York, or Wells, there were built squared eastern chapels in sympathy with the Cistercian and Augustinian building. In the thirteenth century the pressure that finally determined

the English habit—so that now every single cathedral of England ends with an east gable instead of an apse—came from the Lady Chapel, whose popular building was that of the Bishops.

Turning from the ground plan, if we look up at the walls of these Bishops' churches, we can read the history of a masoncraft delivering itself from the control of monastic ideals. It has been seen, at Canterbury, how the "artifices" refused to be bound by the monks' admiration for the splendid Benedictine Romanesque of their destroyed quire; how William of Sens, despite their protests, went his own way, and pulled its pillars down; and how William the Englishman got still further into the Gothic as he finished the building, under the patronage, it would seem, of Archbishop Baldwin, the Cistercian. Under Bishop Seffrid the re-building of Chichester Cathedral continued the progress of Gothic, and then under Bishop Lucy there is further advance at Winchester. One can trace the masons in these three cathedrals going on from one to the other and developing their Early English style. It was now an art of slender shaftings of Purbeck marble, pointed lancets, wall arcades ranged one behind the other, level-crowned vaults, with multiplied string-courses of marble, arch-moulds of many members, some adorned with the dog-tooth, and often with a free and varied carving of white stone in label-heads and capitals—and finally it had a splendid free figure-sculpture. So we have it in St. Hugh's Cathedral at Lincoln and the Ely Galilee, then at Salisbury, and in all the great works of the thirteenth century in England.

But though revolutionary in its details as compared with the older art, the planning and scheme had not given up the monastic complexion of the Anglo-Norman cathedral. The three divisions of its setting out, the three stories of its wall, are those of the Benedictine Winchester and Durham—which had been those of the Norman abbeys of Normandy. And in all this, in its retention of monastic setting out as well as in its English detail, it offers itself as distinct from the contemporary style of France. Its effects are pretty, graceful, polished, and somewhat petty beside the great constructional mechanism of the French Gothic evolution. The short moulded bell and thin abacus of the Purbeck capital is in especial contrast with the massive capitals of the Île de France: the minutely furrowed strings and arch-moulds

are somewhat weak beside the big simple members of French arches: the gracefulness of the lancet combination somewhat womanly beside the uncompromising directness of the French window design: and certainly the little English doorways are insignificant beside the great caverns on the face of the French façades. On the other hand, as the legacy of its monastic derivation, the English church has more feature: it has more aspects inside and out—a wonderful picturesqueness in its many transepts and narrow solemn aisles. You see a French Cathedral all at once: its overwhelming view on entrance is repeated from all positions. Externally it has its one great front, but it is only a lumpish mass in the side views: the English Cathedral makes façades on all sides. It is to be noted that this picturesqueness and fulness of feature rather gains by the haphazard of the many dated extensions of the English fabric. Lastly, the broad square-ended spaciousness of our builders gives—at least to English eyes—a better effect than the crowding in of the aisled and chapelled apses of French art, oppressive inside, and outside a medley of confusing angles.

Still a comparison of beauties is odious, and attempts to balance the perfections of two works of art means running one's head against the wall of personal tastes. The one undoubted virtue of the French Cathedral of the thirteenth century was that it was bigger all round than her English sister: the latter as a compensation had a more shapely exterior, and a graceful crown of towers and spires.

Lincoln Cathedral must now be accepted as the better exemplar of the English beauties than Salisbury. Both have endured barbarous restorations, but the interior of Salisbury has been most illtreated. Swept and garnished by the famous Wyatt, it has been entered into by many restorers, and its last state is that of encaustic floors, varnished marble, and a quire bepainted and bedizened. In all its external views, however, Salisbury has charms in its shapely proportions and the colour of its grey weathered stone, with their setting of green water-fed meadows, if its façades confess the unambitious range of English sobriety.

Lincoln is of nobler fibre inside and out—the views inside of its transepts and quire have the mystery and stately suggestion which gives to the English work the faculty of often looking bigger than it is—and

here, too, are remains of a beautiful glass that makes sunny flashes of glory. Outside, the vigour of its buttressings, the grouping of its many transepts, projecting porches, and noble chapter house, and above all the clear upstanding of the towers, gives its long length a power on the eye that few foreign cathedrals can approach.

Beverley quire should be mentioned as a much smaller work but similarly affording this distinction for English work. The Rochester, Worcester and Ely quires are less distinguished, but the great transept of York, and the "Nine Altars" of Durham, are spacious and stately internally, with somewhat later expressions than the body of Lincoln. Externally we can be proud of the Peterborough and Wells fronts. The varied qualities of the English Builders come before us in such strikingly dissimilar compositions; both have the distinction of retaining in their storied arcades the greater part of their original figure-sculpture, and at Wells this sculpture is of the most beautiful remaining.

The Wells front with its statues in place may be taken as a revelation of the aims of Gothic building. It is easy to see such a work as no framework of merely architectural designing, but as a whole piece of sculpture, and to recognize its object as not of aesthetic composition but of religious presentation. Incidental to this presentation was the evolution of schools of building-masons, of figure-sculptors, of painters, of glass-stainers, and all the craftsmen of mediaeval art; but the purpose of the architecture, and the whole meaning of it lay in its exhibition of religious faith.

It has to be allowed, perhaps, that the energy of this building lay in the blood of an expanding civilization, but the religious authority, as captaining and representing the age, initiated and dictated its expression. The best theologian available has here at Wells set out the story that the sculpture has to tell, has "named the saints represented and ordered their position."[1] The sculptors have worked every gesture as obedient to the tradition of a sacred art, and every attitude with dignity and simplicity. In this sense the great works of the thirteenth century were the works of religious artists. But the wide revelation of this expression, such as Wells front makes, must not be narrowed into the

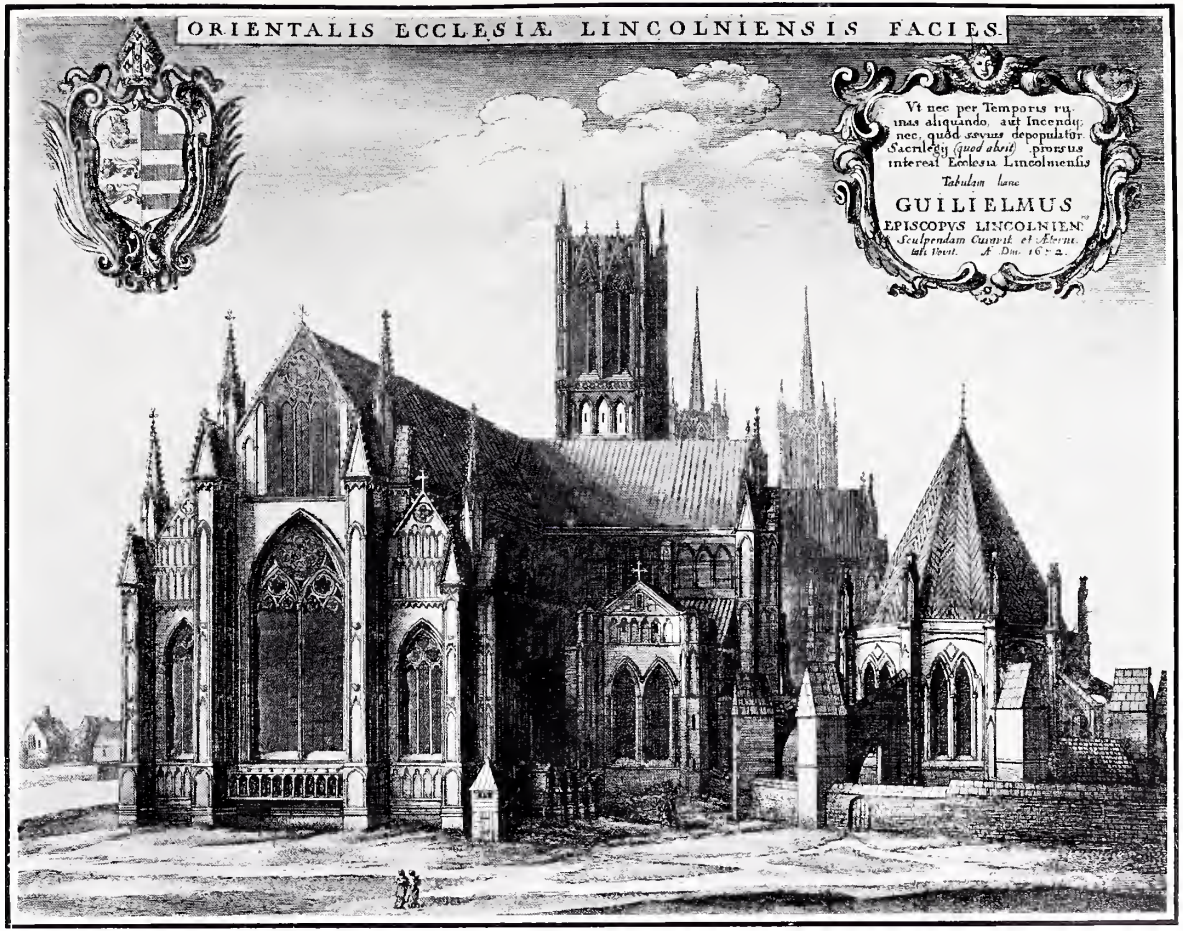
[1] See *Archaeologia* for 1905, where Mr. St. John Hope and Professor Lethaby have determined as much of the scheme as is likely to be recovered from the details of the statues.

dogma that the "religious" were either the architects or craftsmen of such works. Though Bishop Jocelyn must be called the builder of Wells front, though Poore must be associated with Salisbury and Durham, and Grosseteste with Lincoln—such bishops were neither the designers nor the surveyors of building, any more than such big personages could have gone on the scaffold or chiselled the statues.

The records that have come down to us are in fact sufficiently explicit on all these points. The ascription of the work as an honour is always to the donor, or great initiator; its execution belonged to the two other faculties, one responsible for the business of it, the other for the craft of it: and these two faculties were kept distinct. The business lay in providing the money, in collecting the materials, in the organization and payment of the craftsmen, such as a steward —or, as we call him, Agent—would undertake. One must remember that there was no commercial supply of the necessaries of building. The first work of a church was often the cutting down of a forest to get wood, for fuel for the limekiln, and to make the centerings for the arches. Sand and stone required special conveyances: at Canterbury William of Sens had to arrange machines for getting in his stone as his first work, and at Rievaulx the monks began by the making of a canal to float their material to the site.

For the administration of building there have been, in all established communities, special officials provided and paid out of the dues and commissions arising from the money that went through their hands. Seeing that such sums would be very large as to cathedrals and castles, surveyorships were lucrative posts given to the great as prizes, often to make them a salary, or maintenance, the work of the office being non-existent or done by deputy: such were the ordinary customs as to mediaeval offices on all sides. One of the great officers, both in cathedral and monastic bodies, was given the special charge of the buildings as part of his regular duty. We find great ecclesiastics, as Elias de Dereham and William of Wykeham acting as clerks of works. The poet Chaucer was for a time surveyor of the king's work. It is clear therefore that such appointments were often only posts of emolument, and practically sinecures as regards exercise of building. But on occasion they must have allowed their holders to get a knowledge of

8. Salisbury Cathedral, from the Cloisters. *From a drawing by J. W. M. Turner. Victoria and Albert Museum.*




9. Lincoln Cathedral, from the East. *From the engraving by W. Hollar.*

10 Wells Cathedral, part of the West Front. *From a drawing by J. Harold Gibbons. By his kind permission.*

II. York Minster, the North Transept. *From an engraving by C. Askey after a drawing by Edward Blore.*

architecture, or at any rate the capacity for directing it. This, however, is a different matter from the supposition that these ecclesiastical commissioners were a class specially trained in architecture, and doing the work of masons, craftsmen or artists, at any rate in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[2] As "dominus" the ecclesiastic ordered the work, and as "custos" administered it, but to build it there was always the "magister."

With a perception clear as to these three separate personalities associated with cathedral building and likely to be mentioned in connexion with them, we can approach the records. These are delightfully haphazard in their ascriptions—the bishop, abbot or prior is most often held in honour for the building of a church. The clerk and the master only by the merest chance get recorded, and of the two the business man, as the bigger in rank, would be favoured in any mention. Unless therefore a builder is called in the record "artifex" or "cementarius" (or there be other evidence of his actually working) the suspicion is that his connexion with the building was that of surveyorship. This suspicion holds good, I think, as to De Noyer of Lincoln called "constructor" for St. Hugh; as to Elias of Dereham, Canon of Salisbury, and specifically connected with works in many places; as to Nicolas of York, another Canon, entitled "l'engineur" in the Salisbury accounts in 1262; as to the "architector novæ fabricæ" in the Durham records, as well as to the numerous sacrists and other monastic officials such as Alan of Walsingham at Ely, Fossor at Durham, Reginald de Bray at Malvern—all being probably "magistri operum" in the official sense. The work and the art of cathedrals were in other hands, those of the "artifices" and "cementarii," viz. the artisans and masons.

It is seldom, however, that we get the names of the masons—the

[2] In the early middle ages the sanctity of the building craft was, I think, undoubted. When the ecclesiastic in his missionizing capacity appeared as the possessor of all knowledge and all culture, he undertook the building trades as part of that capacity. St. Gillaume of Dijon was asked into Normandy to build monasteries. An Abbot of France was appointed in the eleventh century "quia bonus esset aedificator," and B. Gundulph of Rochester was "in opere cementario plurimum sciens et efficax." There are passages in the records of the early building in England, as, for example, the account of the Llanthony canon, afterwards Bishop of Hereford, and the verses in the metrical *Life of St. Hugh*, as to this Bishop's handling the hod, which show the tradition continued into the twelfth century

two masters at Canterbury have been mentioned by Gervase, and it is implied by his narrative that he himself was the Surveyor in charge of the payments. As to Wells front, Adam Lock and his son are conjectured and a master Norreys as succeeding. As to Salisbury, "Robertus cementarius rexit per XX annos." And the King's orders and accounts in the Rolls office occasionally mention men whom we may take for craftsmen in respect of his works at Westminster and his various palaces.

But one is often asked who were the "architects" of cathedrals. The reply must be that the function of architect as a designer of building, and determiner of its forms of beauty, did not exist in any personality. The dictation of plans and dimensions was in the hands of the high ecclesiastic: the business was the perquisite of the underlings of the church: the execution was that of a trained body of craftsmen. Between these the cathedral was built, but the masons had the best claim to the honour of "architects," as at any rate "artists" by their faculty of work. It is clear that the mason's craft had created a special class of skilled workers in stone, and the circumstances of mediaeval building by the time of the thirteenth century lifted these into the highest position for heading and regulating the processes of construction. From the mason class were derived the "Magistri," who, as at Canterbury, were put in charge of works.

The idea of the Freemason in the eyes of some explains all the perfection of mediaeval building. Was there a masonic overguild covering West Europe, the possessors of mysteries and secrets which gave them an almost supernatural power of building? "I believe," said Lord Macaulay in a conversation reported by Mrs. Beecher Stowe, "that all the cathedrals of Europe came into existence nearly contemporaneously, and were built by travelling companies of masons under the direction of a systematic organization." This guild, if it existed, must also have had a supernatural power of hiding its tracks, for in all our accounts and records are no references which can be twisted into a consciousness of a Freemason guild. Instead of indicating a central body of masoncraft to which ecclesiastics applied for the building of their churches, they mention artisans coming haphazardly together, and their organization for the special work,

as at Canterbury; or in the case of continuous building in one of our large cathedrals, we have the establishment of a cathedral bureau, "opus" or "opera" as it was called,[3] such as at York, which has indeed practically continued to our own day.

The constitution was on the lines of mediaeval communities. The head of it was a "master" who in the thirteenth century I think was always a mason by trade, for his practice of setting out stone for cutting would give him the faculty of setting out ground for planning, and setting out stone for building. Under his ruling were "socii" or fellow workmen of various trades; and then the apprentices in each trade. That the master should be always on the spot of the building, having only one work to rule, as at Salisbury, and on death succeeded by another, was I think the invariable thirteenth-century practice. What came about when the master was not the directing worker, but the advising director, and able to have more than one building under his charge (as in 1322 Farleigh the mason of Salisbury spire had), belongs to a later art of building than that of our thirteenth-century cathedrals.

[3] Two words occur in Cathedral records for the works of new building, and one is tempted to apply "opus" to the special work, as at Canterbury, and the "fabrica" to the continuous repair of a cathedral. I cannot, however, find there is any certainty of description in this distinction, "novum opus" and "nova fabrica" being used interchangeably, and sometimes "opus fabricæ," which may be translated the workshop of the building.

## CHAPTER IV

# The Summit of Gothic Art (1250–1290)

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| Westminster (quire, transepts, chapter-house) | 1245–1260 |
| Hereford (north transept, chapter-house) | 1250–1282 |
| Lichfield (nave) | 1250–1290 |
| Lincoln (Angel Choir) | 1256–1280 |
| Old St. Paul's (quire) | 1260–1300 |
| Salisbury (cloister and chapter-house) | 1263–1284 |
| St. Alban's (quire) | c. 1280 |
| Southwell (chapter-house) | c. 1280 |
| Wells (chapter-house) | 1290–1302 |
| York (chapter-house) | 1290–1310 |

THE last half of the thirteenth century developed in the English masons the full character of the Gothic invention of style. Though the progress to this was a gradual one and the position was reached and left by almost imperceptible steps, certain considerations, apart from that of mere aesthetic appreciation, can be taken as indicating a central or sublimated character for the English art at the beginning of Edward I's reign.

Of these considerations we may take the most abstract first. In the beginnings of Gothic art each district of West Europe attempted its own experimental culture of Romanesque, and the builders of cathedrals developed local varieties of masoncraft. Then, in the first half of the thirteenth century, predominant types of Gothic established themselves in wider areas—Early French and Early English—and were uniform manners for most of France and of England respectively; and there were national expressions (though of less Gothic character) in Germany, in Spain and in Italy. When, however, we reach the second half of the thirteenth century, these national manners draw together, and as to the detail of construction, a wide uniformity prevails in the practice of the whole of West European architecture. After

1300, however, centralization ceases, national divergences of detail begin, and there are finally in the fifteenth century for each great national division of Western Europe—for France, England, Germany, Spain, and Italy respectively distinct manners of architecture. On the grounds of this consideration, therefore, we can place a summit or central period of Gothic style as coming about 1275, because then the practice of the Gothic masons had throughout Europe the greatest degree of uniformity.

That the French evolution of Gothic architecture contributed in the highest degree to this European uniformity is undoubted. It is clear that Spain, Germany, and Italy took much from the workshops and masons' yards of Paris. With regard to the English art with which we are immediately concerned one can give particulars. The early years of the thirteenth century developed flying buttresses and broad windowings of tracery in the French art ; but these features come with their full accent into English work only in the latter part of the thirteenth century, without doubt as the absorption of the French usage. There appear at the same date, too, in the English figure-sculpture treatments of drapery and action, and in the leaf-carving, certain features of naturalism, which seem clearly of the French fashion, superseding the more conventional English habits. On the other hand there were certain gifts to the French art as well as takings from them. The treatments of the vault, piers and arch-mouldings by the French Builders after 1250 have at Amiens, Rouen, and Le Mans assimilated certain English ideas which had been long in the practice of our thirteenth-century style. But the balance of influence was on the French side—the building of Westminster Abbey significantly marks the breaking down of the barrier, which for some forty years had isolated the arts of England. And it may therefore be claimed that the appearance of the French features of distinct Gothic expression in the English art from 1250 to 1290 marks this period as the summit of the English style.

An additional indication of central character is given to the era of close approximation in the English and French building detail when one looks at the way in which it was introduced. The building of the new abbey church at Westminster was the purpose and under the direction of a King. The first impress of Cathedral Builders in England

has been *Norman* and *monastic*—the next, of the thirteenth century, *insular* and *episcopal*—now, at the end of the century, we might apply the labels of *continental* and *regal*. The position of the central Gothic is just that when the external dictation of art shifted from the hands of the ecclesiastical to the political authority. Though cloister and chapter-house at Westminster were in their tradition and position monastic, their building and employment made them state apartments; they were used for the meeting of Parliament. The secular building at Lincoln and Beverley had before this attached chapter-houses as octagonal vaulted chambers to the north side of the canons' quires. Now while in the conventual establishment such buildings were as much working parts of the scheme as the church, being necessary for the daily life of monks, for secular canons—clergy not bound to a cloister—their provision was, if not superfluous, at any rate more of state than of convenience. Their being attached to our thirteenth-century cathedrals is just another example of how the monkish mould clung to their plannings. The canons of Salisbury and Hereford imitated the state apartments of Westminster, providing chapter-house and cloister-garth according to the regular monastic fashion, in the angle between the nave and transept. The beauty and size of all this at Salisbury is remarkable, seeing how largely it was mere display. And with similar grandeur the secular bodies of Southwell, Lichfield, York, Wells, and finally St. Paul's, London, found occasion for great chapter-houses, but leaving the monastic model placed them off the north transept of their cathedrals. Both the idea and planning of multagonal chapter-houses were thoroughly English, and moreover their evolution of branched vaultings was something outside the continental habit.

Still at Westminster and Salisbury the detail has distinctly that French approximation, which has been pointed out as attending the regal building at Westminster, and it is worth while to consider the full extent of the French influence and explain how it came into our art. Henry III had been brought up in France and remained in close touch with the court of St. Louis in the golden age of the art of Paris. We know a good deal about his works of building and ornamenting the royal palaces and castles, because his orders for them are preserved in the Rolls Office. He was in constant progress from one abode to

another, as was the habit of the mediaeval king; and though no doubt works of repair and decoration were going on under all our monarchs, the orders of Henry III exhibit, I think, a more than usual kingly interest in the details of the work. The personal note is shown in his directions as to the subjects and placings of paintings and sculpture, "to be put where the king has ordered"; so again to Edward of Westminster "as we remember you to have said to us." "I will have it done though it cost a hundred pounds," is declared on one occasion. Most of the orders give details of ornamental architecture and marble shafted windows,[1] of painted glass and images, and one is for bronze leopards to his throne "costing but little more" than if sculptured in marble. The erection of the Confessor's shrine in Italian mosaics by a Roman artificer indicates in a similar way a dilettante recognition of the arts by the king. There remains, too, a full record of one year's expenditure on the works at Westminster, which included in that year part of the abbey building and of the chapter-house, and this is put in a concise form, as if Henry III had expressly called for it. Then we also note at this time certain definite appointments, as that of the King's mason, sculptor and painter. So that I think that Henry III must be accepted as not merely the irresponsible orderer of building, but as having a certain initiation of its methods and a patronage of its arts. Learned in the magnificence of the French Court, he introduced its ideas to the craftsmen of London and set in fact a "French" fashion.

In respect of its Builders, Westminster Abbey may be taken as of the rank of a Cathedral and it is an eloquent demonstration of this "French" fashion of the King. Certain prominent strongholds of the English independence in architecture are definitely surrendered in it. For some fifty years—except in the case of Cistercian Abbeys with plans dictated from Pontigny—the English church-ending had been square. Westminster, however, builds an apse with apsidal path and chapels—not exactly the copy of any one French Cathedral—but an adequate summary of "French" experiments. With the apse has come too the constructional bay-scheme of the French art, with its narrow

[1] There are constantly orders for two lighted windows and in the case of a hall in Dublin for a circular window to be thirty feet across.

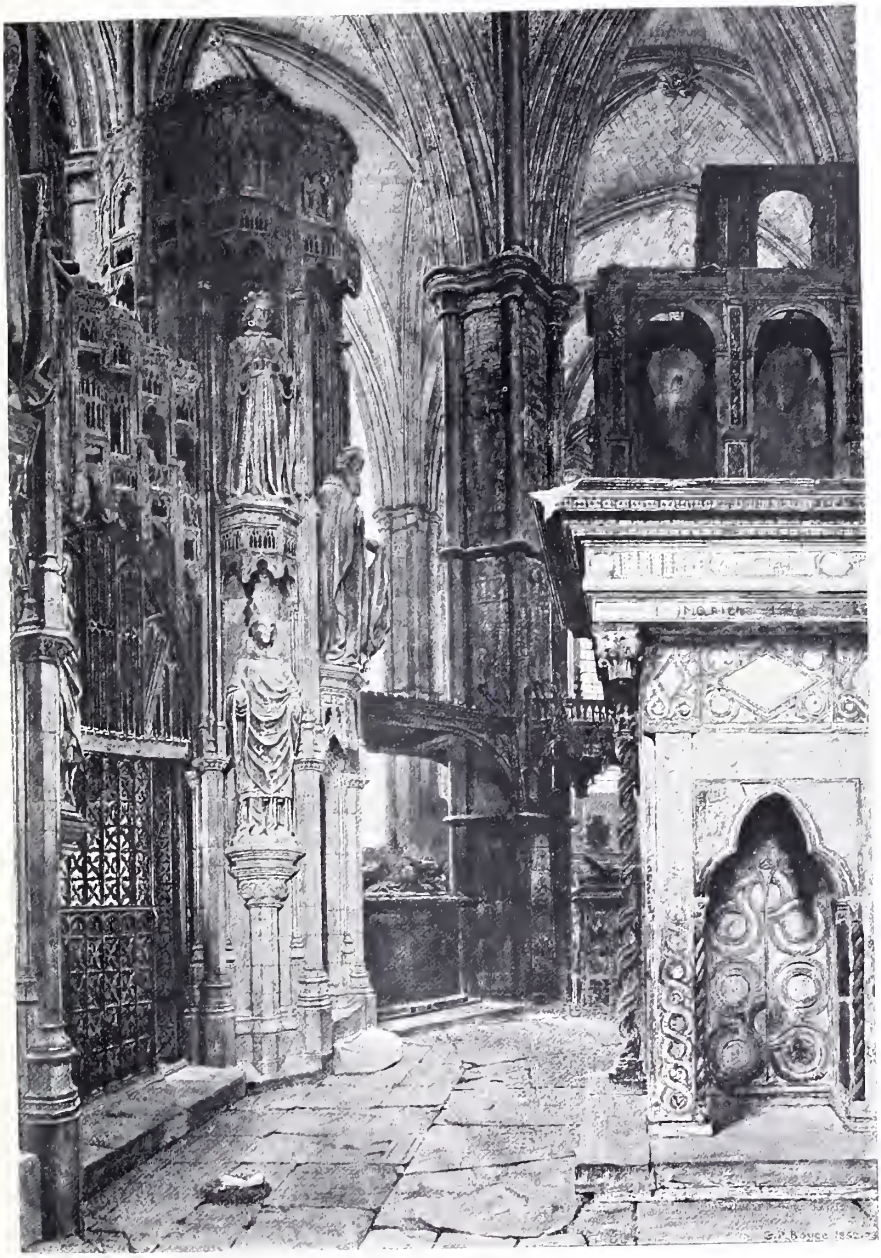
loftiness, flying buttresses, and windows which have discarded the grouping of English lancets and adopted that constructional logical arrangement which is universal in the Île de France style up to 1250.

In such matters, the building of Westminster is manifestly a copy of the French cathedrals, as if an intelligent clerk of building, a "custos" of the king's works like Edward Fitzotho, had been sent to make notes of cathedrals, and brought back the broad easily described facts of them for the instruction of the London masons. For beyond these broad ideas, the French style is not to be found in the new quire of Westminster: its masoncraft is "Early English." There are the Purbeck-marble shafts with short moulded round-planned capitals—as different in construction, as they are distinct in expression, from the flower-festooned big-blocked columns of the contemporary Reims.

The strings and labels, diapered spandrels and stiff-leaf crockets of the English make are all here as much as at Salisbury and Lincoln. There was no borrowing of the detail of French style from the contemporary Sainte Chapelle of Paris. Still it is likely that French masons were borrowed for the vaulting of the apse [2]: and here and there in the wall-arcades we look upon a capital that has been carved by a French sculptor—just as we find one or two of the same date at Chichester, mixed among the work of the English carvers, and showing not only the fact of the Frenchman, but as clearly the fact of his rarity, and that the native masons were not inclined to copy him. That there was no great influx of foreigners for the building of Westminster is shown, too, by the vaultings throughout being of the English fashion. Indeed, on general lines, despite its French apse, the church, like most English churches, has had to follow too closely the lines of an original Romanesque cross-plan, one of narrow nave and distinct transepts, to be of the effect of a French Cathedral, such as Amiens or Reims. We do not have at all the complete conveyance of "French" architecture as this was conveyed to Le Mans, or Cologne.

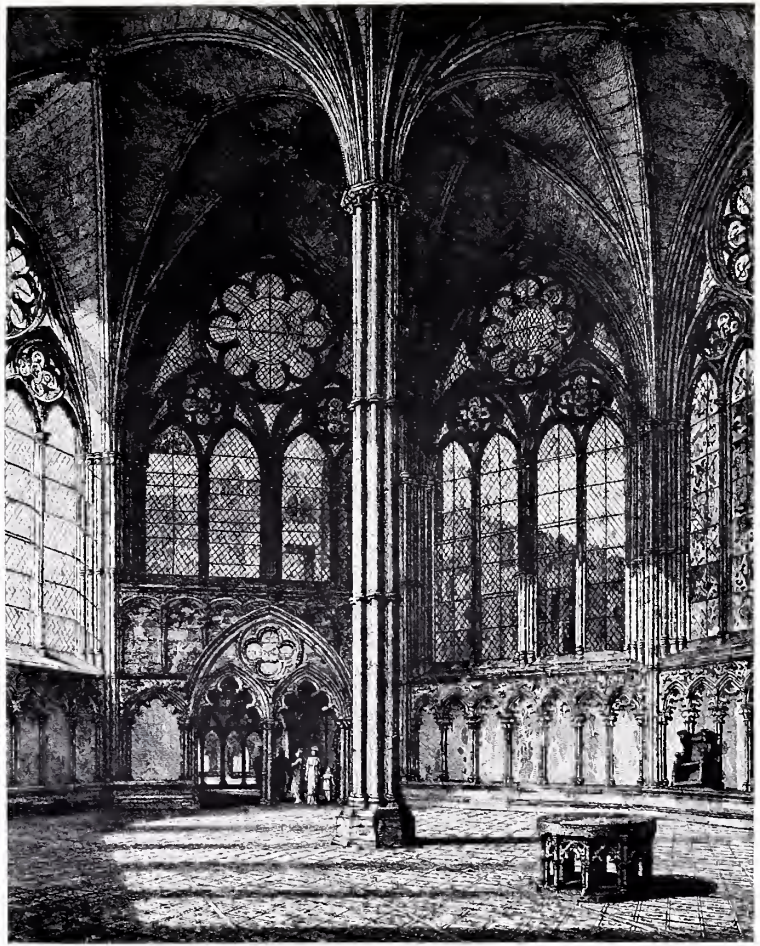
To speak of Westminster, therefore, as the complete annexation of English style by the French mason is to misread the "French" facts them-

[2] Beaulieu, a Cistercian Abbey of Hampshire, having to build its circular apse (1220), asked for safe conduct for a French mason, as no doubt the English masons could not manage the problems of vaulting

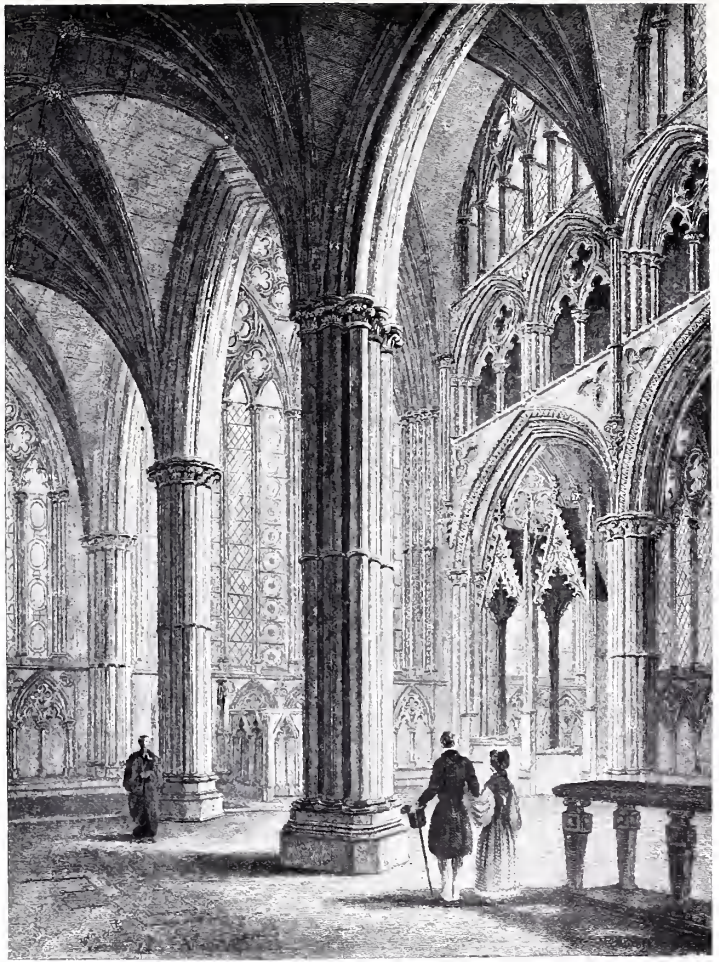


12. Westminster Abbey, Chapel of Edward the Confessor. *From a drawing by G. P. Boyce. Victoria and Albert Museum.*

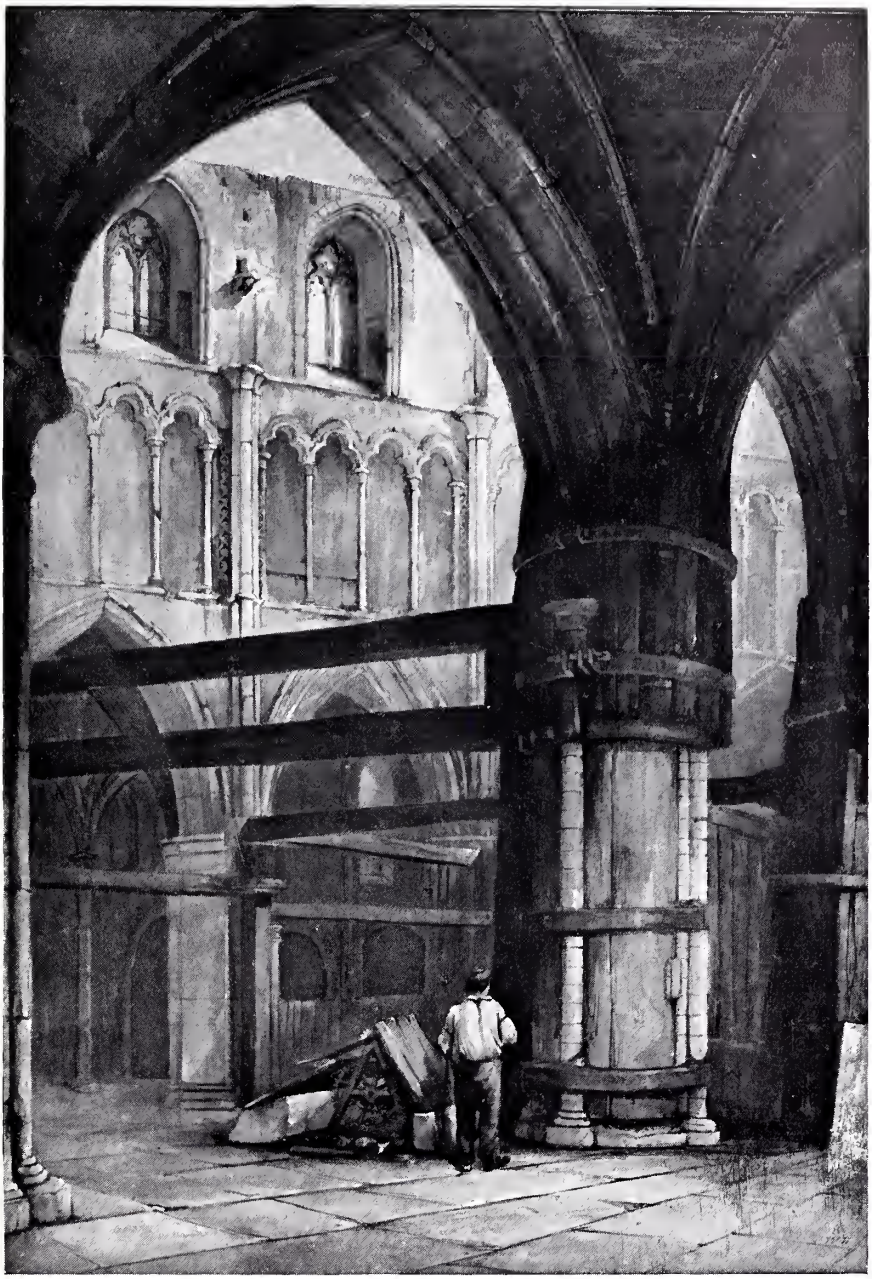
13. Westminster Abbey, North Ambulatory. *From a drawing by F. Nash. Victoria and Albert Museum.*



14. Salisbury Cathedral, the Chapter House. *From an engraving by J. le Keux after a drawing by F. Mackenzie.*



15. Lincoln Cathedral, the Chancel. *From an engraving by B. Winkles after a drawing by R. Garland.*



16. Southwark Cathedral, the old Nave. *From a drawing by T. C. Dibdin. Victoria and Albert Museum.*

selves : it is still more to disregard what was built along with and after the king's abbey. Though we have spoken of Westminster building as of Cathedral scale, it was not the premier church of London, but only as St. Denis beside Nôtre Dame. The representative church of London City was St. Paul's, and the canons there began somewhere about 1255 their new quire, which would therefore be in building immediately in succession to the King's quire of Westminster. The masons and marblers most likely went from one work to the other, so that here was an excellent opportunity for showing the acceptance by the English Builders of the French introductions. On the theory of the full Gothic having now reached England, St. Paul's quire ought to have been after the pattern of that of Cologne, or like Tournai in Flanders or Leon in Spain. But its construction and planning can be certainly recovered from Hollar's prints and these enable us to be sure its builders were no pupils of Westminster, but have in fact ignored all the lessons of the French style. In plan St. Paul's quire was built as a long square-ended hall with a single aisle on either side, just as Lincoln " Angel Choir " was being built, and as that of York would be, in another hundred years. Its scheme of construction has the wide bays, the developed triforium and low branching vaults, which the Ely presbytery had just finished, and which Exeter quire was about to begin. The consistent progress of English Cathedral Builders in their own style is therefore established. The French peculiarities of plan and construction that appeared at Westminster had no effect on them, however much the advance of detail shown by the king's masons came into the story.

The generation which built for the king, made advances as if under the stimulus of their French brethren. As in the Westminster Chapter-house (now of course pretty well all restoration), so in the great quire of St. Paul's, in the Lincoln " Angel Choir," in the Salisbury chapter-house, in the Hereford north transept, in the Lichfield nave, and in the many ruined works scattered throughout the breadth of England (such as St. Mary's Abbey, York; Netley Abbey in Hampshire; the front of Binham Abbey in Norfolk, or the dismantled Tintern in Monmouthshire), a beauty and separateness of design and detail can be noted as coming at the Summit of English style.

Cathedral Builders now achieved that lightening of structure, which can be called its economy, if one rids the term of the niggardly surrender of the greater for the less which is *our* architectural economy. The mason had won to his goal in securing the biggest spaces beneath his stone archings, in lifting his vaults with the highest possible vacuity, in getting the greatest light for his interiors, in raising the greatest majesty of towers: and all with the least expenditure of material and the least waste of labour. Experiment had succeeded experiment until the solidities of the Romanesque ideal, the direct children of the imperial Roman construction, were quite whittled away, and what had been inert blocks of rubble in wall and roof, had become a vertebrate structure, in which every cube-foot of stone obtained its separate shape and function. The French masons worked it all out with the acumen of their race, logically and scientifically—a logic and science which let them down on occasion as at Beauvais. The English attacked the same problems more spasmodically and humorously, with that compromise of ends to traditional means, which is of the English nature. But in both the one ideal made a likeness in the result, and though separately achieved, there are similar details.

Now of course, in this uniformity was the freemasonry of craft, but I cannot think of this as the organized promulgation of a central guild, the existence of which is not proved. The masons in one country knew what was doing in the others because English masons went abroad and French and German came to England, and, returning, told what they had seen. Any invention or successful experiment in the craft of building would be notable, and circulated. Thus, Vilars de Honcourt, the master-mason of Cambrai, was a traveller, and had his memoranda of devices and bits of construction taken from many districts. So when the French masons developed their two lighted windows with a big eye above (which they did very quickly, refining it till the divisions become bars of stone), the English followed suit with their triple lancets; and the two parallel developments known to each other, began to mingle in the tracery windows of 1250. As well as at Westminster we find windows of two and four lights arranged on the French scheme at Salisbury, Netley and Binham say: and three and five-lighted windows in the French Gothic at Amiens

and Lisieux; the borrowings coming straightforwardly and naturally for the needs of the occasion. Yet, though the methods of window arrangement are borrowed, the English or French manners do not follow them into the neighbour arts. There have been introductions of idea, but the craftsmen were native. So in other details: the multiplied moulding of the English, and the simple orders of the French reacted one on the other and produced the sections which were common to both in the years of the Westminster chapter-house. Many of the habits of the English vault, its oblong compartments, its levelness, and sometimes a midrib, appear at Amiens, St. Quentin and Rouen in France after 1250. But it was an approximation of details, not of styles: in the big matters of construction the French art was always summary, complete, scientific; the English in comparison pretty, petty, inconsequent. On these grounds the chieftainship of the French development of Gothic is established over everything done in the rest of West Europe, not because the French invented Gothic detail, but by reason of their consummate practice, at the summit of their style creating works which in scale and character are pre-eminent. All that the English, the Germans, the Italians, and the Spanish did were, in comparison, either of less account, of less spontaneity, or of less expression.

On the decorative side the central position and high craftsmanship of the Paris workshops led to Paris fashions being copied. In the carving of c. 1260 in England we come upon two distinct instances, and it is to be noted that these are not characteristically found in the actual building work of Westminster Abbey, though the subsequent monuments of the quire show them.

The first is that naturalism of foliage which the French carvers developed in their capitals when the English were employing a very different beautiful convention which has got the name of "stiff-leaf." About 1260 the "Early English" foliage is discarded in the decoration of shrines and tombs—a good example is the tomb of Bishop Bridport (1262) at Salisbury;[3] and thereafter for some twenty years the capitals of English architecture exhibit most beautiful and natural renderings

[3] See also fragments of a screen-work now in the undercroft of chapter-house at Wells; on the same stone the "stiff-leaf" and the naturalistic foliage.

of leaf and flower, which again c. 1290 get mannerised into the puckers and twists that were the "Decorated" convention.

The other distinct introduction was that of natural draperies in figure-works. The folds of thirteenth-century dress which at Wells, Westminster, and Lincoln, had been rendered with the convention of straight rippled surfaces, about 1275 in England begin to be reproduced as soft billowy surfaces. The effigy of Aveline in Westminster (d. 1273) is an early instance of what had been for some years in the French sculpture at Paris. Such revolutions of decorative treatment would come, however, by the importation into England not of French artists, but of their works—the images, bronzes, ivories, caskets and paintings of the Parisian workshops. In accord with the King's fashion, the London craftsmen copied the French objects, and the style extended to architectural furniture.

Now here again the summit or centre of the English style is disclosed. The fact of a *fashion* in decorative artists means the special application of certain craftsmen to the production of beautiful objects, and implies a selection from the ranks of the building craftsmen. The royal accounts would be likely to be the earliest place where such a selection would be indicated. A King with a taste for art would gather together the personal craftsmen of excellence and take them out of common employment. We read accordingly of appointments—not only of the King's goldsmith and the King's painter, but of the King's mason and sculptor. And the accounts in the Rolls office which give the expenses of the making of the monuments to Queen Eleanor show that there were in 1290 stone-carvers who made images outside their working at a building—as independent sculptors ("imaginatores") in competition with the goldsmith's production of wood and metal saints. It can be seen therefore that in the latter part of the thirteenth century the Cathedral would no longer breed its own style of figure-sculpture in the masonry of its building, as Amiens, Chartres and Wells had done, but after building would apply to the workshops of a city to be furnished, and get its stone statues, its screens and shrines from a regular trade of image-makers.

The thirteenth-century cathedral had indeed all along in one significant habit been getting some of its art from outside, viz., in its

importation of the Purbeck marble. But it is to be noted that the Purbeck marblers were workers of the parts of building, supplying shafts and strings, as well as fonts and recumbent figures. And it is significant that the end of the thirteenth century sees the last of the Purbeck figure-work. They are pillars, pavings and the monuments of only architectural detail that come from Corfe after 1300: the quarry was no longer the centre of the finer arts, but the city had taken its place.

London no doubt was the earliest and chief centre of the trades of church-furnishing: but at the end of the thirteenth century York, Bristol, Nottingham, etc., followed suit. And thereafter the craft of Cathedral Builders was one thing, that of the Cathedral furnishing another. The screens, figures, tombs and shrines might have no connexion with the local masoncraft that had built the walls and carved the capitals. There ceased that complete dominant representation of every art in the fabric: and with this ceased that common feeling of a whole nation's expression, to be replaced by the competing expressions of various trades. This then was the first step in the path which, little by little, takes art out of the expression of the community as a whole and puts it in the hands of a limited body, a class of personal artists. When each trade had its art-shop and competed with one another to secure custom, the result was an increasing specialization, first of each craft fancied by the connoisseur, and then of each craftsman, brought so under dominion of fashion. It was all an evolution extending over centuries, but its starting point came in the moment when the architectural scheme surrendered its most skilful workmen to the demand for special work—as for example when they were called up to London to carry out the King's fashion or to carve the statues of Queen Eleanor. For the time the technical ability of the arts would be quickened by a patronage which made credited artists out of uncredited workmen. The skill of the sculptor would be sharpened by his personal ambition, while for a time the feeling and meaning of the art would still be the universal noble instinct of the original quality. While this lasts here is the Summit in the life history of an Art.

## CHAPTER V

# The Cathedral Builders of the Fourteenth Century

## 1290–1350

| | |
|---|---|
| Exeter (quire, transepts, nave) | 1280–1350 |
| York (nave) | 1290–1345 |
| Ripon (east front) | c. 1290 |
| Bristol (quire) | 1298–1332 |
| Lincoln (tower) | 1307–1311 |
| Gloucester (south aisle of nave) | 1307–1329 |
| „ (south transept and quire) | 1331–1357 |
| St. Albans (Lady chapel) | 1308–1321 |
| Wells (tower, lady-chapel and quire) | 1315–1350 |
| Lichfield (quire and lady-chapel) | 1320–1350 |
| Ely (octagon, quire and lady-chapel) | 1321–1350 |
| Carlisle (quire and east front) | 1321–1350 |
| Salisbury spire) | 1334–1350 |
| Hereford (tower) | c. 1335 |

THE Cathedral which remains in best illustration of what the fourteenth-century builder thought and did is Exeter. Its architecture has come down in fair preservation and with much of its radiantly decorative character untouched. In the usual nomenclature of English Gothic style the term "Decorated" has been given on account of the picturesque variety and rich ornament of the middle English period. But as applied between the "Early English" and "Perpendicular" it obtains too wide a stretch. However appropriate after 1290, "Decorated" has no meaning for what is the real mid-Gothic building, and its use has led to misunderstandings and a confusion of works distinct in date and inspiration. The essential change from thirteenth-century to fourteenth-century Gothic was not that of single to many lighted windows, or of "Early English" mould-sections to "Decorated": Rickman's division, which makes the midway forms transitional instead of substantial art, obscures the true position. Sharpe, though he

based his divisions on the one quality only of the window head, better represented the facts with his "Lancet," "Geometrical," and "Flowing." The text-books of Parker have, however, established Rickman's classification, with the consequence that "Decorated" has been not only antedated, but to add to the confusion, often used as synonymous with "fourteenth-century." So that on the one hand we may find early "Decorated" taken to include Westminster Abbey as the first English work with double lighted windows, and on the other the nave of Winchester brought into the same category by being given its date of the late fourteenth century.

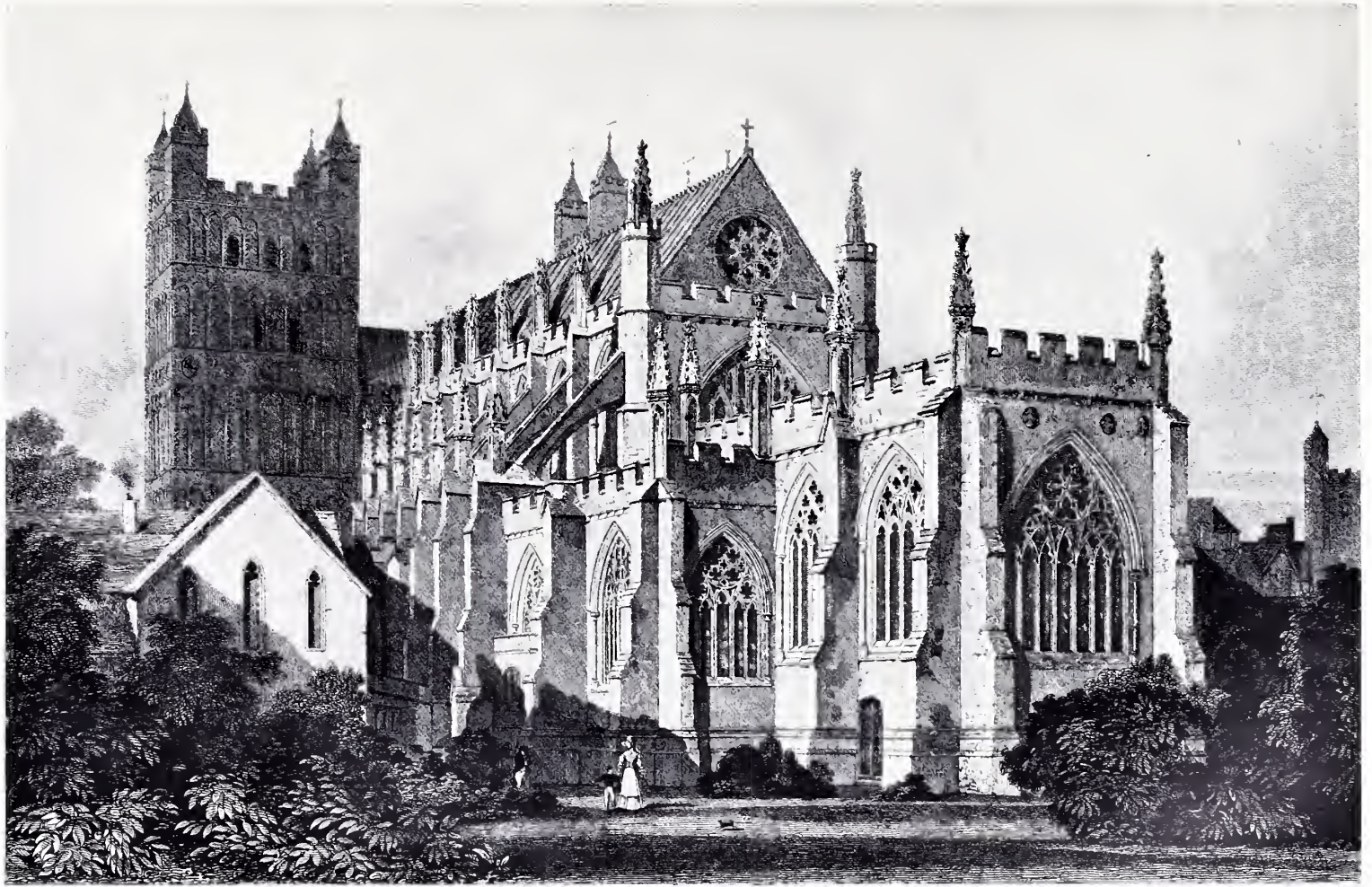
I would lay stress on there being good reason for separating the Cathedral Builders after 1300 from those of Westminster Abbey and Lincoln "Angel Choir." The fourteenth century brought in a new dynasty in art. The sculpturesque handling of architecture, and its religious tradition, so long the nurses of Gothic, were alike lost when decorators' schemes displaced the masonic evolution and at the same time the religion of the Saints was superseded by that of chivalry. Fourteenth-century architects seem to me to present themselves in the guise of splendid revellers making a day of carnival for which all the hard facts of life are put away out of sight. It is all brilliance and merriment in their luxurious spendthrift art, bred of the joy and pride of a class of nobles. In their architecture the monk's enthusiasm, the bishop's piety, the king's artistic fashion, are gone out of date: all have yielded to the rule of chivalry, which in one aristocratic equality makes pageant for king, noble and ecclesiastic. As they appeared at the tourney, or in the chase, or in the glory of the battle array, so as one social class they entered the lists in the pride of their sumptuous building.

The diocese of Exeter happened in the first half of the fourteenth century to be particularly open to this expression of architecture. Its bishops Stapledon and Grandisson were nobles in the rank of the highest—the first was the Lord Treasurer of England, who attempting to hold London for Edward II was murdered by the populace. Grandisson, the frequent entertainer of princes, in the plenitude of his pride, refused the visitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The amounts of their spending on the Cathedral of Exeter were considerable. The

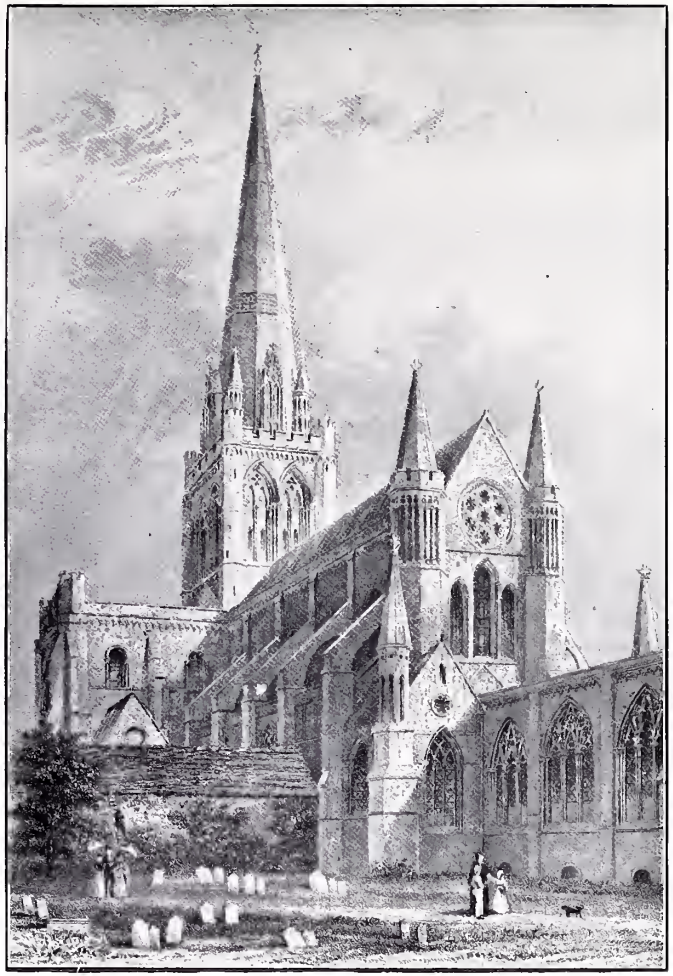
fabric rolls are preserved,[1] and extracts from the accounts appear in Canon Freeman's "Architectural History of Exeter Cathedral." There is recorded the making of a silver reredos of considerable costliness and of other furniture of great value, as well as of the sedilia, bishop's throne, choir-screen, etc., which still remain. All the precious metal, and imagery mentioned has, of course, gone from the screens and altars (the windows too have lost their ancient glass), but much of the screenwork itself and many monuments have come down to us, and their good preservation has withstood the restorations of the nineteenth century better than in most cathedrals. And the same may be said of the mediaeval fabric of Exeter generally: it still supports and suggests the remembrance of its magnificent fourteenth-century decorativeness. The English art is fortunate in this possession, when the destruction of our best work has been so usual, and it is to be hoped that the unnecessary and unsightly rebuildings which have injured the cloisters and west front will now be stayed.

An interesting point in the history of the Exeter masons was their influence on the other side of the Channel. The connexion between Brittany and England became very close about the middle of the fourteenth century: the two were in constant alliance and at war with the central French power. A great era of Breton building appears about 1340, and its plans are markedly English in their arrangements, with long quires and square east-ends. The methods of the masons too, their striding canopies, their varied window traceries, and all the character of their style at Quimper, Treguier, Lamballe, St. Pol de Leon, and Folgoet is very close to that of Exeter. The likeness of a fourteenth-century English church is to be best seen, perhaps, in some of these Breton churches, to which still adhere the Catholic realities denied to our Protestant rechauffées of mediaevalism. Subsequently at the end of the fourteenth century this Breton masoncraft is found

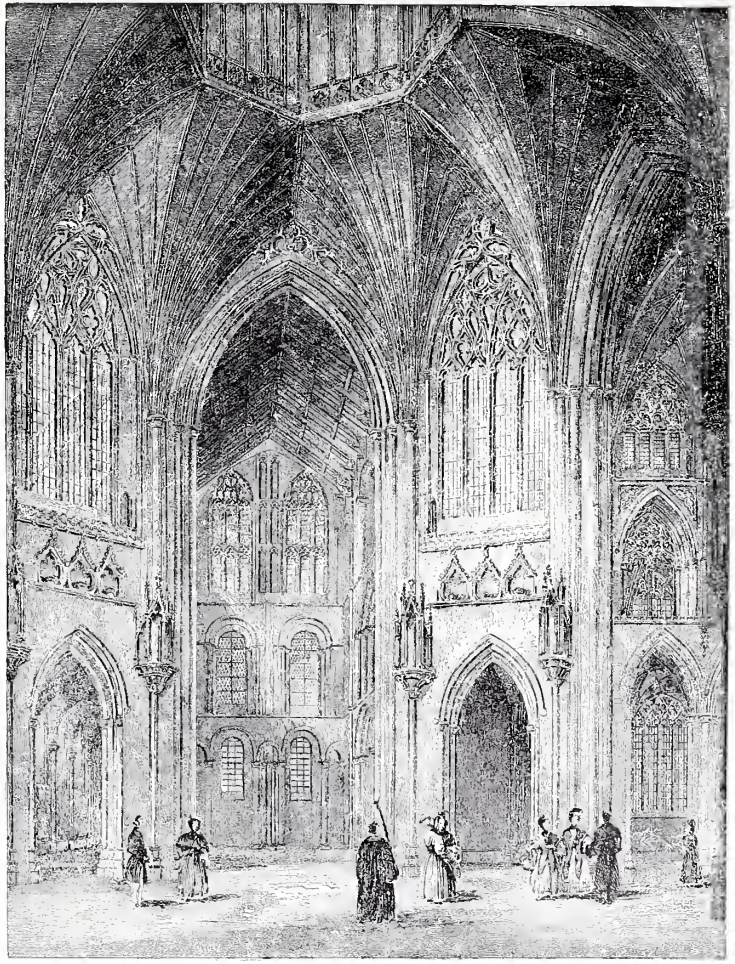
[1] The complete publication of the building accounts of Exeter is one of the most urgent necessities of English mediaeval archaeology. I would commend it to the notice of the Cathedral authority and of the Archaeological Society of Devon. The original terms used in mediaeval records for the agents and processes of cathedral building are of importance, for the mis-translation of architectural notices throws doubt on much of the accounts of mediaeval building usually given. Even such a careful historian as Bishop Stubbs is to be found translating "artifices" architects, and "reparari" to restore.



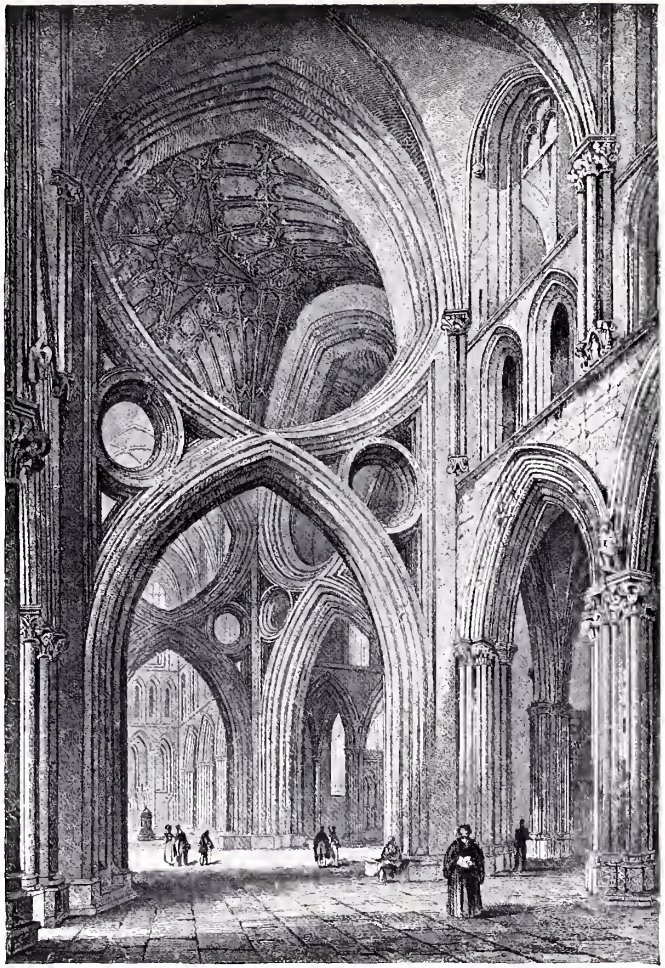
17. Exeter Cathedral, from the South-East. *From an engraving by R. Sands after a drawing by S. Rayner*



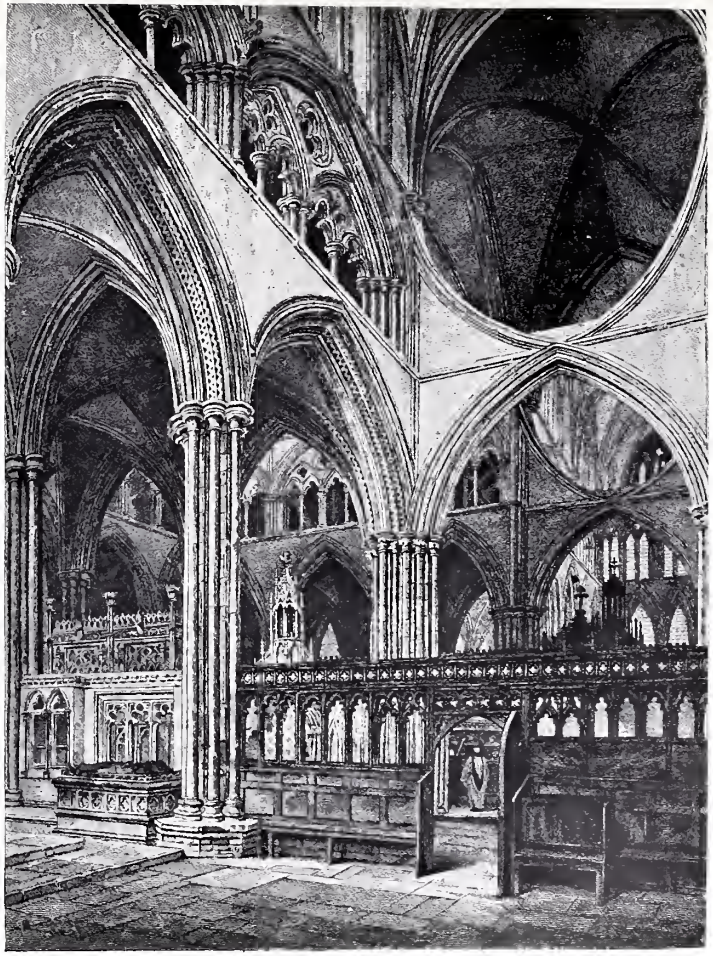
18. Chichester Cathedral, from the South-East. *From an engraving by B. Winkles after a drawing by R. Garland.*



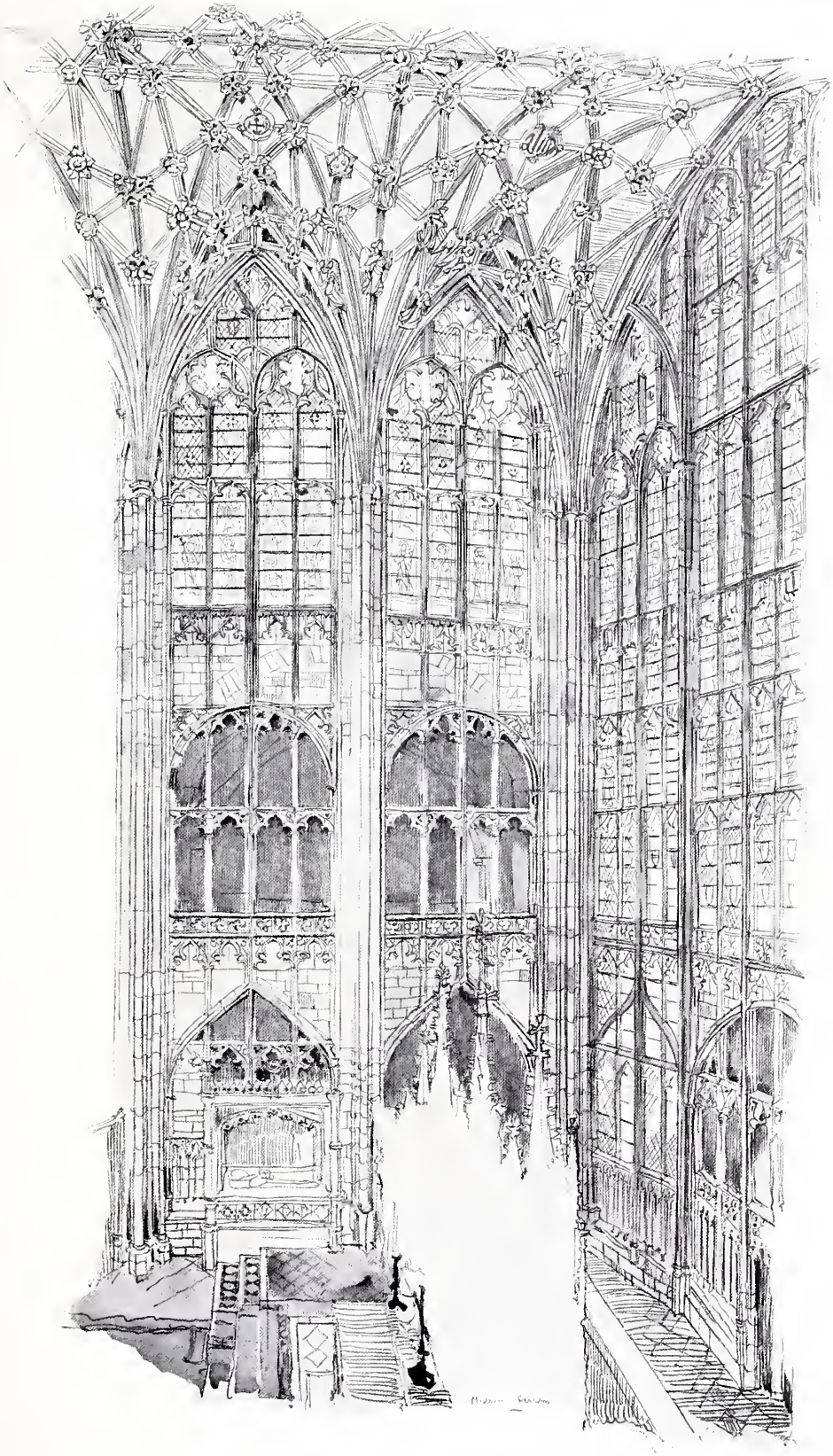
19. Ely Cathedral, the Octagon. *From an engraving by B. Winkles after a drawing by R. Garland.*



20. Wells Cathedral, Arches under the Central Tower. *From an engraving by W. Woolnoth after a drawing by R. Garland.*



21. Salisbury Cathedral, the small Transept. *From an engraving by W. Smith after a drawing by F. Mackenzie.*



22. Gloucester Cathedral, the Presbytery. *From a drawing by J. Harold Gibbons. By his kind permission.*

extending its influence into Normandy, and then, after the expulsion of the English, on the return of prosperity, making way in north France, till with some Flemish contribution to its manner it became the distinct Flamboyant style of Caudebec, Rouen and Abbeville.

In England the style of the Exeter masons may be traced to the Welsh St. David's in Bishop Gower's work to that Cathedral, in connexion with which was the building of his magnificent Bishop's palace. The ruins give a vivid idea of the state and circumstances of a fourteenth-century Bishop, who had his palace with two great halls, the battlemented circuit, and gateways of a great noble. A similar instance of episcopal magnificence was to be found at Lichfield, where Bishop Langton rebuilt the east limb of the church, and fortified the close, making himself a magnificent castle in its north-east corner. The Parliamentary wars, in which were three sieges of Lichfield, brought this castle to the ground, and ruined the Cathedral, so that repairs and finally the thorough restorations of the last fifty years have left little now that reflects the fourteenth century. There can still, however, be gathered some idea of the sandstone masoncraft as a local style distinct from that of Exeter which may be recognized, too, in the east chapel of St. Albans—lately, in its ruins, a beautiful and valuable example, but now thoroughly rebuilt and reworked out of all faithfulness to the original expression.

The strongest influence on this Midland masonry must, I think, have come from the London workshops at this period. A great destruction has, however, wiped out the record of the mediaeval churches of London city. That of the Franciscan friars (part of whose buildings were incorporated in Christ's Hospital lately destroyed) was of cathedral size: the great Trinity Church of the Augustinians was another building now quite gone that would have given us examples of what the City masons built. Until the burning of the Houses of Parliament there was to be studied in St. Stephen's chapel, built for the palace of Westminster, a still more interesting sample of London style. This was of two dates—begun about 1330 and enlarged twenty years later, but we know it now only in Mackenzie's drawings. The one remarkable piece of fourteenth-century building above ground remaining in London itself (except some much restored bits of St. Bartholomew's, Smithfield) is the chapel of the Bishops of Ely—built

for their town palace about 1300. This has some remarkable exhibitions of window tracery, but to get any accurate idea of what was the fashion of the London masons we must turn, I think, to some remains in Essex—to the fragments of the great chancel at Dunmow, and to the Lady Chapel attached to the nave of Waltham Abbey. These works exhibit an extreme delicacy of line in the mouldings and a tenuity of construction, especially in the traceries, which may be taken as the last word of the London mason before the Black Death, and all this agrees with what the drawings of Mackenzie show to have been the style of St. Stephen's.

The style of the London mason, though we possess very little representation of it in our Cathedrals, is important because of the certainty of its influence on the Cathedral Builders of the fourteenth century in the west, north and east of England as well as in the Midlands. It must not be forgotten that, though it is now destroyed, the craft of the capital city, both drew up to London masons from many parts of England, and sent them down into the provinces. There is ample proof of a distribution of works of sculpture and decoration to, at any rate, a wide district in competition with the local productions. But though all through the fourteenth century there had been this centralizing influence, it is remarkable that not until after the Black Death did it become a distinct factor tending to uniformity in style. Its action in the first half of the century seems confined to exciting a general progress of style among the masons, while the local bodies in each work developed everywhere picturesque points of distinction. For example, at Ely, at Selby and at Bristol were three quires building c. 1330, but each has a distinct exhibition of masoncraft.

Ely Cathedral shows, indeed, a variety of building crafts, as far as style is concerned, carried on side by side in three works which were in erection from 1322 to 1349. In the former year the Norman tower had fallen, and had brought down with it some bays of the Romanesque quire. The famous Alan of Walsingham was at the time the Sacrist of the monastery—that is, the official to whose hands the fabric and its repair was confided. He was also Prior in 1322, and on his death (probably 1364) he was commemorated in his epitaph as "flos operatorum." He is recorded as a "fabricator" of gold and silver, and

to have built a shop for goldsmith's work. On these grounds it is taken that Alan of Walsingham was the architect of the works done during his office. The general question of such ascriptions has been already discussed in the introduction. Alan of Walsingham may be called Builder or Architect of the works at Ely—either as being Prior, or as being Sacrist. In the former capacity he had claim to the titles by virtue of his headship of the monastery: in the latter he was specially "operarius," for the operator of his epitaph may be taken as a variant of operarius, i.e. supervisor (surveyor) operis (of the building). It will be seen then that his official position gave into his hands both the dictation and the business of Cathedral building. The scheme of the octagonal setting out of the new lantern over the crossing is therefore likely to be of his ordering. This is often cited as a mediaeval Gothic dome, though it has little title to that distinction in comparison with the Spanish *cimborio* such as was built at Lerida or Barcelona. Walsingham's dome is really a development of the wood vaulting of York chapter-house, combined with the common construction of the monastery kitchens and their central ventilators. There were certainly carpenters about to whom the Sacrist could confide the construction of his idea of an octagon lantern. His function of architect might therefore consist, if in anything, in superintending the setting out of the eight columns "mensuratas architectonica arte," as the Latin eulogium on him (Cotton MS. Tit. I.) has it. But beyond this there is doubt, for Alan of Walsingham cannot claim in the records the sole mention of official connexion with the works at Ely. Another monk, R. de Saxmundham, is accounted as making the quire, and to John of Wysbeche "monacho simplici" was confided, by Bishop Montacute, the building of the Lady Chapel. In fact, as usual, the testimony of the records is too treacherous for us to build thereon any theory of Alan of Walsingham being a personal builder, whose work can be recognized in the octagon, the choir, and the Lady Chapel of Ely. And the testimony of the buildings themselves is unfortunate for the contention. Instead of that likeness of treatment, which would have been so interesting and conspicuous, had the architectural personality of Alan of Walsingham counted for anything, we see at Ely three works of singular unlikeness built during his office of Prior. The dignified

masoncraft of the octagon piers has a note of distinction in it, which is quite absent from the flower-bespattered decorator's triviality which makes the quire of Ely a clear example of the decadence; and by the side of both, the broad spaciousness of the Lady Chapel, with its romantic arcadings, is quite another thing. In fact, as usual, the real Cathedral Builders, in the sense of the real artists of their effects, were the different bodies of masons set to build octagon, quire and Lady Chapel, all as it would seem, side by side. I would perhaps call these masons Ancaster-men, from the building of Heckington church, for the octagon piers; workers of Barnack stone, come, say, from Peterborough for the quire; and for the Lady Chapel, Norwich masons, decorative workers in the Caen-stone and Clunch that were used in the Norfolk church-furnishings.

The same deduction, as to bodies of masons developing, in their treatment of a special stone, tricks and manners of working, can be made from the north-country building. The fourteenth-century exploited for its works the fine-grained magnesian limestone of Tadcaster; convents and chapters acquired each their own quarry of it, and thus a splendid Yorkshire architecture developed, with marked characteristics. There has descended to us unfortunately but a tithe of this building, for the reason that it developed to a large extent in the Augustinian and Premonstratensian building whose great churches the Dissolution has swept away. The chief cathedral example of the craft is the nave of York Minster begun in 1280 and, with the Chapter-house, building on till the Black Death: the naves of Beverley Minster, and of Bridlington (the latter all that is left out of the ruin of the big Augustinian church) are secondary examples; and of smaller scale, remains the whole church of the Howden canons, with the quire dismantled. But the great Augustinian quires were the characteristic works of this building, and the open gable of the Guisborough shows how fine they were c. 1300. But to our day the Benedictine Selby alone among the great abbeys of the north has preserved its roofed-in quire, except the cathedrals of Ripon and Carlisle, which, though somewhat patch-works, must serve as our examples of the art.

These Yorkshire Builders built with great windows of flowing traceries, with big projecting buttresses crowned with solid crocketted

pinnacles, and gables elaborated with pierced parapets, and niches full of statues, their whole art florid and opulent in comparison with the rather lean elegance of the London style and the rather mechanical constructions of the western. The aristocratic nature of the great corporations for which these quires were built is to be seen in this full-blooded exuberance. That the ecclesiastical life of the fourteenth century was just that of luxurious nobles is exhibited in these churches as clearly as in the records of the time, which speak of the continuous hunting of prelates, and the feasting and sporting of monastery guests and the general luxurious laxity of the cloister. In the fourteenth century bodies of knights came into the services of monastic houses, as at Peterborough ; the closes of Cathedrals were fortified, as at Lichfield; and Bishops had their castles in all directions. As the near relatives of nobles, the Augustinian canons often lodged aristocratic assemblies in their buildings, met together for social intercourse and hunting. The gatehouse of Kirkham has carved on its face the shields of knights rather than the emblems of faith. York nave puts heraldry in the spandrels of its arcade, has symbolized the religion of chivalry rather than that of sacred story. The shift in idea from this time continues in English architectural decoration. The minstrel and the juggler were, as at Beverley, the living themes of its carving, and the ancient subjects of Christian history were more and more conventionalized till they lost all the savour of reality : mixed with the badges of heraldry, they were the similar badges of an ecclesiastic convention.

In the warmth and glow of the early fourteenth century art, however, this decadence of motive may be forgotten. In the service of the vivid pageantry of architecture the workshops of York were prolific in sumptuous and vigorous productions. The abundant niches that cover the façades of the north-country fourteenth century churches, as at York, Howden, and Selby, held a statuary art, of which, however, only a few worn fragments remain. The recumbent effigies of the York shops are better preserved as at Bedale, and in the Temple Church, London, and are magnificent in their freedom and romantic vigour. The screenworks and monuments, too, as at Selby and Beverley, are of the richest luxuriance; the Percy tomb at the latter remarkable for its medley of religious and chivalric sculpture, all of a piece with

the gorgeous fulsomeness of vine crockets and diapers. Moreover, the beauty of the York glass painting is still to be seen in York Minster. Though it be but from fragments, we can picture to ourselves the luxurious bravery and irresponsible pageant which the York art of 1248 put forth from its workshops. Its nemesis came suddenly—almost as if in a moment this architecture of the north came to an end—the splendid effulgence of north-country style was quenched by an overwhelming catastrophe. The decrepitude of art following the Black Death is one of the most dramatic incidents in the whole history of art.

If we turn to the remaining district of fourteenth-century Cathedral Builders, that of the west of England, the story of a quite different art must be read in the Cathedrals of Bristol, Wells and Gloucester. On a first glance the conditions of the north country seem reproduced at Bristol: the Augustinians, under the patronage of the great aristocrats of the Berkeley family, built themselves a splendid quire. Here, too, the workshops of a busy trade in all the crafts of art turned out sculpture, effigies, glass and wood-carving, such as we can see in the Bristol and Wells Cathedrals and elsewhere in the West country churches. But the difference of it all in style and detail from the works of the north is great, and there is difference, too, from the romantic sunny art of Exeter. At Selby and at Exeter the building and its decoration go together: one expression makes their quality. The peculiarity of the western art is the absence of this combined expression and the emergence therein of the mason-builder, whose intention of construction was independent of the finishing and furnishing arts.

The great variety developed in the fourteenth-century styles of the mason had several curious instances in the west. For example, there was building beside Exeter Cathedral, at the expense of the same Bishop Grandisson, the strangely different quire of Ottery St. Mary: at Tewkesbury the broad romantic style of its quire rebuilding was followed by a quite different art of lean stone carpentry in its monuments: at Gloucester there are the same quick successions, the aisle of 1325 with the full round manner and ball-flower garnishing of the mid-England masons, and then immediately the stone scaffolding and panelled constructions of the transept and quire.

GROUP OF BISHOPS.
*From a PSALTER of the early Fifteenth Century.*
*British Museum, Add. MSS.* 29704.

Now in these cases the latter styles mentioned, while each is so different from the former, show themselves to have a family likeness, and the home of their methods can be traced to Bristol. In Abbot Knowles' rebuilding of the Augustinian quire, begun c. 1300, his masons showed peculiar constructional devices in the support of the vault by skeleton arches, and methods of constructional ornament in the traceries and niches. At Wells we can follow these clever Bristol constructionists being called in to save the tower, c. 1328, and building their skeleton arches for the crossing. I think, too, that the Richard of Farleigh called to superintend the building of Salisbury spire was of the same craft, since he had work too at Bath and Reading. Then the reconstruction of the quire at Wells and the buildings at Ottery St. Mary show further progress in the scheme of panel developments. Finally at Gloucester, beginning c. 1331 in the south transept and continued in the quire, we have the complete development of the skeleton system of perpendicular building.

Now the point is that this was throughout an architectural evolution, a science of expert masonic engineering, dispensing to a great extent with carved decoration, but developing its ornament out of the architectural forms. The arts of sculpture had grown up in the building practice: the "novum opus" of a Cathedral had been organized on the spot, and the "artifices congregati ad opus" wrought, built, carved, painted and furnished it. But in the Gloucester craft there has been no such comprehension of sculpture and furniture, the building has been pure architecture exhibited by a guild of masons.

In this connexion it may be observed that, while the twelfth- or thirteenth-century cathedral was usually built of a hard stone either local or easily got from over sea, and all parts of it show this stone—monuments, screens and figure sculpture and all—after 1290, a variety of stones and marbles, not those of the building fabric, make their appearance in the church-furnishings. Also after the first quarter of the fourteenth century a softer finer building stone comes into use in the fabric itself, as well as for the monuments and ornamental screens. These new introductions are, I think, clear indication of the employment of various trades and guilds of stone cutters who, established in towns or in the case of cathedrals created in the building of its fabric,

came to have the monopoly of building in their district. It can be shown that the distribution of statues, effigies and ornamental screens from 1300 onwards indicate clearly a trade of church furnishing from centres. Great blocks of a soft stone were needed for a trade in imagery and monumental effigies: the harder bedded building stones, such as Purbeck, Doulting, Barnack and the Yorkshire grit-stone were ill adapted for such shop-work. So decorative sculptors developed the working of fine stones in the competition of elaboration and the carving of detail. Nothing can surpass the finesse and delicacy in the rendering of architectural carving on the front of Exeter or the Percy tomb and screens at Beverley. Though a material, which allowed such delicacy, weathered badly in comparison with the rough stones of thirteenth-century building, it is found, as the fourteenth century proceeds, more and more in the fabric of churches, and whole pieces of external building are seen to be wrought in soft stones.

The conclusion is that while the imagers and monument makers had segregated and organized their trades in cities, the building stone-masons organized too. The Bristol style, as I have sketched it, is evidence that the constructional masons had established guilds. A Cathedral had ceased to be a free enterprise of building, a school of art in which the whole range of the plastic and colour expression experimented. Its figure-work and its screens, and now its constructions were supplied on the trade lines of a commercial distribution.

That the agent in this transformation should be the noble of the fourteenth century is significant. In his monument when dead, the aristocrat achieved the final and permanent pageant of his career. In the supply of such monuments competition developed the wood tester of the bier into a stone canopy, and the canopy into a chantry. The purchaser wanted continually greater magnificence and the chantries tended to become bigger and more architectural as the fourteenth century advanced. Trades in monuments of Caen and Reigate stone[2] in London; of Beer stone at Exeter; of Clunch at Norwich; of Ancaster

[2] The Purbeck marblers still sent out architectural pieces, and there were workers in the black marbles of Flanders, as Bishop d'Estria's monument at Canterbury shows; the alabaster trade, which for the next century was to be one of the chief distributors of church furniture, had scarcely begun.

at Lincoln; of Huddlestone at York; of Dundrystone at Bristol, and of Cheltenham stone at Gloucester, show the response to the demand, and of all, I think, the Gloucester men gave the most for the money. The Tewkesbury monuments were a purely architectural development, making a cheap magnificence with their open-work mortuary chapels. They can be seen playing with stone in fanciful ceilings, out of which grew the fan-vault. And in their re-building of their Cathedral these same Gloucester masons built the quire of c. 1350 as an enormous mortuary chapel, in honour of Edward II, dexterously basing it upon the Romanesque foundation of the early quire. The significant fact of it all was that in their developments of panel and skeleton arch they created the English Perpendicular style.

## CHAPTER VI

# The Official Cathedral Builders of the Late Fourteenth Century, 1350—1410

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| Gloucester (north transept, cloisters) | 1351–1387 |
| Winchester (west front) | 1352–1362 |
| ,, (nave) | 1394–1410 |
| York (quire and tower) | 1361–1407 |
| Wells (west towers) | 1380–1424 |
| Canterbury (nave and cloister) | 1390–1410 |
| Lincoln (west towers) | c. 1400 |
| Ely (upper part of west tower) | c. 1400 |
| Chichester (bell tower) | c. 1400 |

THE Black Death has been mentioned as dramatically letting down the curtain on the splendid and characteristic art of the Yorkshire builders. The completeness of this extinguishment may be instanced from Durham and York. In the cathedral of Durham can be seen the tomb of Bishop Hatfield (1345–1367). Its lower part is the base of the Bishop's throne erected by him at the beginning of his episcopacy, and clearly the work of York masons. On his death his effigy was placed at the back of the throne, and above was built a tabernacled chapel, but for this he or his executors must have gone far afield, for it was at Gloucester and Tewkesbury that masons were making such things. It is recorded, also, that in 1372 Lord Neville got from London the marble and alabaster work [1] for the shrine of St. Cuthbert. It is clear, therefore, that the day of the York workshops,

[1] It is assumed that the screen still remaining behind the altar is part of this work, but it has no marble or alabaster in it, and is of the same work as the Hatfield tabernacle. It will,

with their splendid luxuriant ornament, was over. In the building of York Minster itself there is a break of continuity. The nave and west front had been building up to the Black Death, but the high vault of the nave was unachieved; only a makeshift wood vaulting could be supplied after the calamity of the plague, and it was not till twelve years later, in 1361, that the new quire was begun and, instead of the flowing traceries and redundant fulness of the west front, the east chapel has the skeleton panelling and long transomed windows of the Gloucester mason. In not a few of the north country churches —as, for example, Newark—the effect of the plague in transforming architectural style is marked. But as we pass south this abrupt shift is generally less distinct: in south Yorkshire, at Howden, Hull and Patrington, were churches which though they bring in the western way do it with less distinctness. In Norfolk a hybrid style, retaining much of the fourteenth-century detail and some of its rich feeling, was built to the end of the fourteenth century; the cloisters of Norwich, St. Nicholas church, Lynn, and the magnificent chancel of Walsingham Abbey serve as examples. In London it is clear that building had no sudden stop on account of the plague; St. Stephen's Chapel in Westminster, the finishing of the cloisters and other work in the Abbey buildings, were proceeding from 1349–1366, slowly perhaps, but with no marked interruption; and the general style of the mason in these works goes on in direct continuation of that of the St. Paul's chapter-house and cloister of 1340. When, owing to the mortality of the plague, building-labour was scarce, London would be likely to get its recruits of masons easiest: and so no stoppage or change of style would be apparent.

There was, however, one great abbey-church, now cathedral, that was in continuous building during the plagues; for though that of 1349 was the worst, there followed others in 1361 and 1368. The chronicle of Gloucester records its south transept built 1331–1337, the quire 1337–1351, its high altar and the north transept 1351–1377, and the cloisters completed in 1381. Parliaments were held at Gloucester during the time, and it is possible to surmise that there may have

however, be pointed out that the London and Gloucester crafts were very closely in connexion after the Black Death, so the Hatfield monument may be from London too.

been less complete depopulation here than elsewhere. We know the plague to have been severe at Bristol, and in certain districts of England 75 per cent. of the population are concluded to have been taken off, a mortality that must have meant the complete cessation of building for some years.

But whether or no the Gloucester mason was spared by the plagues, his style survived the general catastrophe and its advance is continuous in the buildings mentioned above. After 1360 it appears widely spread in south England, and by 1390 is adopted north, east, south and west as the distinct national Perpendicular habit of building. I cannot think that one is wrong in attributing this progressive and final wide diffusion to the conditions set up by the Black Death; that this brought to an abrupt termination the many local crafts I have described, while the general scarcity of labour gave peculiar privileges to the survivals.

As to the scarcity of labour, we find a series of statutes passed—there were five of these from 1349–1400—in order to control the travelling of artisans who, owing to the demand for them, went from place to place instead of sticking to their local work. Under such conditions the status of a skilled craft, like that of the building mason, would rise immensely. He was in demand and difficult to get, so that the King's works at Westminster and Windsor required the impressment of masons, and the sheriffs of a large number of counties were ordered to furnish them, and be answerable for their remaining in the work. Instead of staying at home and working in his district, the mason was given a freedom of travelling. The records show the English word "freemason" coming into use: an entry in those of Chichester as to John the mason who was, c. 1400, "Magister operis fabricae" calls him "liberæ conditionis." It is to be seen that the window he built, that of the north transept, is of the Winchester pattern, and that his stonework of big blocks laid with a thick joint is all of the Gloucester craft, and a new thing in Chichester masonry. It would seem, therefore, that the travelling privilege of the mason meant the dispersion of the style of Gloucester and Winchester, and the progress of this dispersion can be noted in distinct stages in the west of England.

Thus by a body of the Gloucester masons was clearly the building of Edington Church in Wiltshire, 1352–1361, under Bishop Edington

of Winchester. Then he carried them, too, to his own cathedral for the rebuilding of a new west front inside the Romanesque galilee. Thereafter at Winchester, and in the south of England generally (as at Christchurch Priory, Hampshire) Perpendicular masoncraft takes those settled forms which were to be of universal currency in England. The nave and cloisters of the Canterbury Cathedral were built under Prior Chillenden c. 1391, and are good examples of how the "Gloucester" manner had the faculty of completely replacing the local styles. There had been in Kent a beautiful characteristic variety of the London "Decorated," but there is no trace of this in Prior Chillenden's work. This succession at Canterbury inferentially indicates that by 1400 the London masons had been converted to Gloucester ways, for the connexions of the London and Canterbury masoncrafts were always intimate. In the same way at Oxford, at Warwick, at Exeter, as well as at Norwich, Ely and York the official Perpendicular was established in possession before the end of the fourteenth century.

At Winchester the appearance of William of Wykeham in connexion with this official style, as I have called it, is a significant point in the story of cathedral builders. Wykeham is the typical official architect of mediaeval building. Originally a subordinate on the King's work at Winchester, he was in 1356 put into the post of clerk of King's works at Windsor. Taking orders he held in 1361 various ecclesiastical appointments, as Dean of St. Martin's-le-Grand, Archdeacon of Lincoln, Northampton, and Birmingham, and Provost of Wells, but all the while was occupied in conducting the building of castles for the King at Queenborough, Porchester, Leeds, Dover, and Wolvesey in Winchester. In 1367 he was raised to be Bishop of Winchester itself, and had begun his college of the Virgin Mary there in 1382 : at Oxford his foundation of New College was opened in 1386. Finally in Winchester Cathedral he proceeded with the transformation, which had been begun by his predecessor Edington, of the eleventh-century nave. He is to be seen, therefore, as all his life concerned with building in an official capacity —first as a clerk of buildings (*supervisor*), then as a keeper (*custos operum*), finally as the dictating ecclesiastic founding colleges and transforming his cathedral. It was said of him that his first introduction

to Edward III was on account of his architectural skill and courtly manners. Such a happy combination of accomplishments has assured for him the title of "professional architect"[2] and for his faculty of design the honour of having invented the Perpendicular style.

Without questioning how appropriate such an invention would be to a professional architect, one may look at the peculiar circumstances of the time and see how they brought Wykeham into prominence. I have referred to the energetic impressments of masons for the King's works after the Black Death and how they were supplied by the sheriffs in batches from many counties. This was the creation of a standing army of builders out of the local militia. It made an organized canon of architectural detail to supersede all those varied manners which founded themselves, in "Decorated" art, on the stone quarry of each district. The clerks of the King's works were the necessary organizers of these mixed battalions, the drill sergeants who got the masons into line; and of such William of Wykeham may be accepted as the most accomplished and famous. Work-master, surveyor, ecclesiastic and Bishop, he marks the extremest prominence in the history of mediaeval art of the middle function—that of the official who was between the ecclesiastic and the mason. For twenty years Wykeham controlled building, and it was probably of him that Wickliffe wrote "as one wise in building castles" and therefore made Bishop. But it would be an anachronism to represent this politic administrator and founder of colleges going upon the scaffold and proposing an evolution of masonic craft. In the eleventh century the Bishop may have been the working clerk of works, the deviser of the plan, the director of its construction, the head craftsman among craftsmen. In the twelfth century, like St. Hugh, he may have pretended to be such for the odour of his sanctity; but at the end of the fourteenth a bishop was neither mason nor clerk, and would not pretend to be. Master William Wynford was his right hand man from 1394–1403. No reflection of religious zeal can be discerned in the architectural expression of the naves of Winchester and Canterbury: rather we must see in them the tomb of

[2] See Cockerell's excellent account of William of Wykeham in the Winchester (1845 volume of the Archaeological Institute.

the religious sentiment of art—as their ordered and scientific panelling first over-laid and then wiped out of existence the architecture of faith.

As a matter of fact, too, the learned and practical stone-shaping which, under the able administration of surveyors like Wykeham, became the stock-in-trade of all English building, was not an evolution of masoncraft, but its extinguishment. The experiment had been that of the Gloucester masons, but now official architecture was standardizing all forms and forbade progress. While for some three hundred years the chisel had been cutting stone every year or two into new shapes for the changing needs of masons; while from 1100 to 1350 every generation had seen new mouldings evolved, new traceries elaborated, new dressings of stone invented; with Perpendicular all this was at an end. In the earlier styles from a section of an arch or a fragment of a window head or, as I have shown as to Chichester, sometimes from a few square inches of wall face, one can tell the date within twenty years; but now the mould-sections scarcely differ for two hundred years, and the set patterns of window and vault were used again and again. Edington's windows at Winchester in 1300, and those of Bath Abbey two hundred years later, are matches. The fan vault of Gloucester cloister of 1384 is repeated in the Christchurch staircase at Oxford as late as 1640.

So standardized under the official régime, the craftsmanship of Cathedral Builders was thoroughly efficient: not a sign of weakness after 500 years appears in the high vaults of Winchester even though they dispense with flying buttresses. The vaults elaborated under the fan-vault system, with their dependent pinnacles at Oxford and at Westminster, are stone engineering of extraordinary temerity, but they show no weaknesses. The towers of the fifteenth century stand on all sides as sound as when they were built. The English Gothic masons never truly realized the capacity of Gothic art to spread ceilings of stone supported on pillars, till William of Wykeham—"wise in building castles"—drilled them and captained them. If no longer faith or romance, every stone of Perpendicular building spells organization and efficiency.

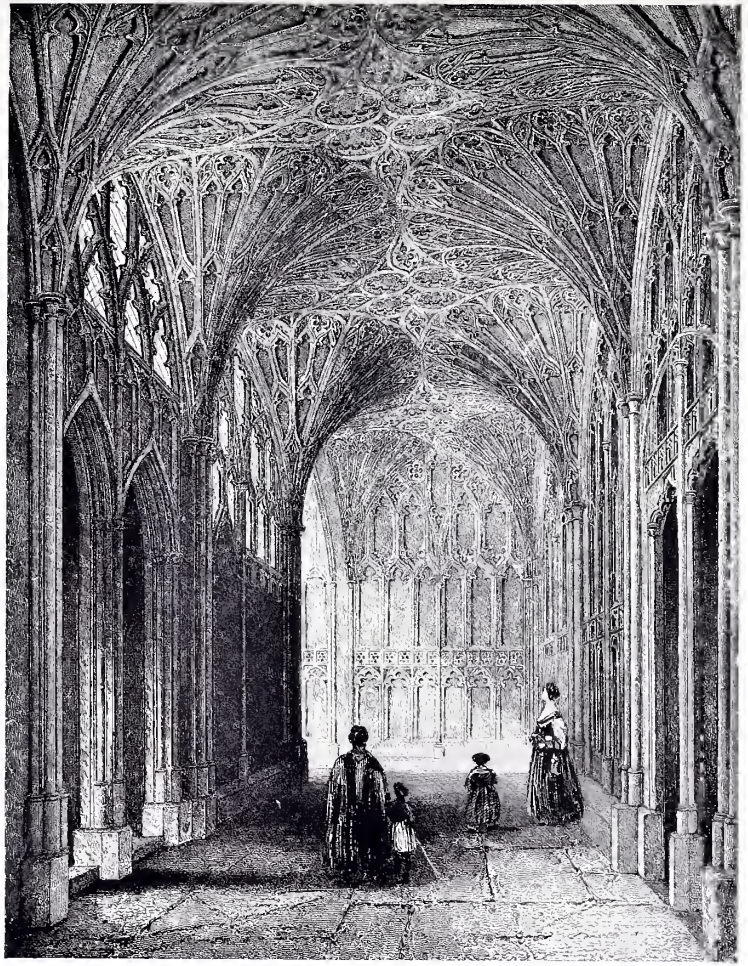
The repute of the mason was on a par with his settled status. The accounts of Bury St. Edmunds[3] and of Bridport tells us how he was to

[3] "Borde for himself as a gentilman, and his servant as a yoman, and thereto two robys,

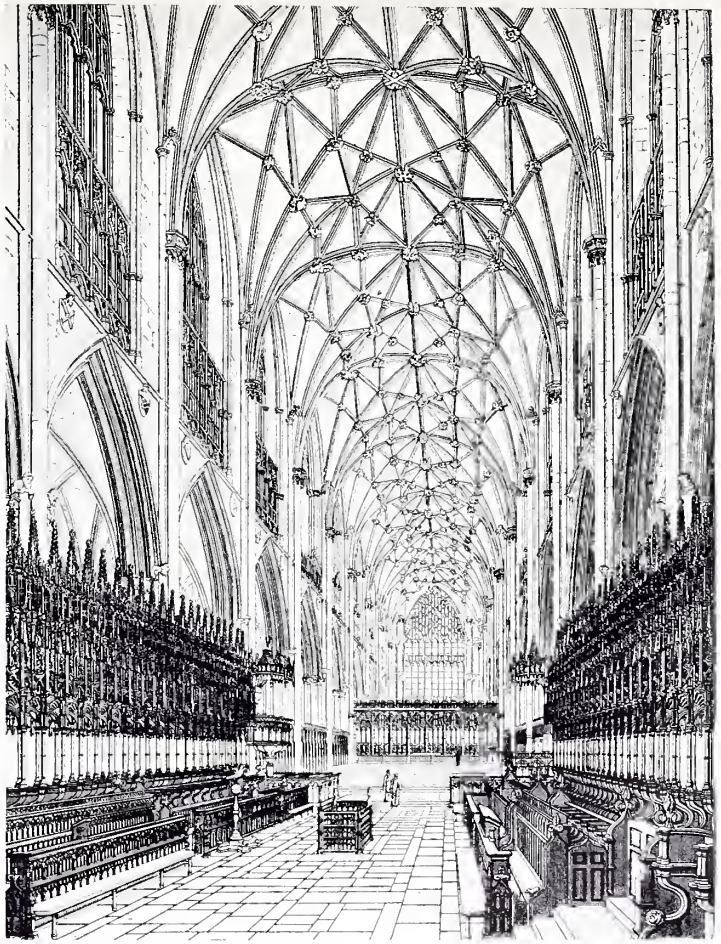
be lodged as a gentleman, and have his dress as such. He is proud, and refuses his cloak in the Westminster accounts of 1355 : makes his contracts now like John Hylmer and William Vertue for the ceiling of St. George's quire at Windsor, and could absent himself like John Cole, the builder of the steeple at Louth in 1503, and be abjectly sent after by the authorities. And the other trades of Cathedral building had their distinct footing. Richard II had Nicholas Walton, c. 1401, a "master-carpenter and engineer of the King's works for the art of carpentry," The glazier, at Chichester, supplies glass with figures in it by contract at so much a foot; and so at York John Thornton of Coventry engages to glaze and paint the east window in three years. The "alablaster men" of Nottingham send out reredoses and relief-panels, "Kervers" of Derbyshire supply monuments with effigies of knights and dames all to order. Citizens of London, Yevely and Lote, contract for the tomb of Richard the Second and his queen at Westminster. All records show a regular orderly business organization of builders and decorators.

Built and furnished by them for the next hundred years were the churches and chapels of kings and wealthy corporations. The expression of the Cathedral in the hands of such "supervisors" as William of Wykeham and Reginald de Bray was *collegiate* — reflecting the established form of a state worship. The monastic flavour of solemn recess and screened chapel is gone from it, and just as completely the romantic colour of the age of chivalry. The expression lay in the lofty hall of a collegiate chapel : as Wykeham's chapels at Winchester and at Oxford, so St. George's at Windsor and King's College Chapel at Cambridge ; an open oblong hall with storied windows, ranges of pinnacles without, ranges of tabernacled stalls within, all rich and regular, stately, decorous, speaking of organization and well administered funds. Such was the character of the last mediaeval age of Cathedral Builders in England, as made for it by the public service of Wykeham out of the dexterities of masoncraft which the Gloucester mason elaborated.

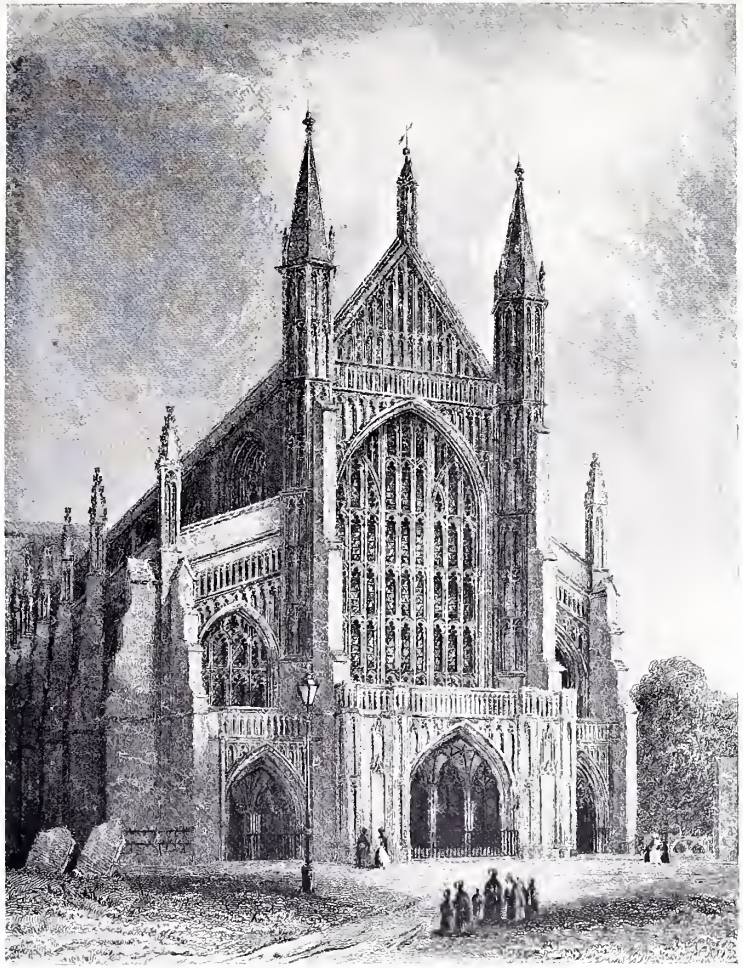
one for himself after a gentilman's livery" so runs John Wode's contract for the repairs of the bell tower "in all manner of things that longe to free masonry."



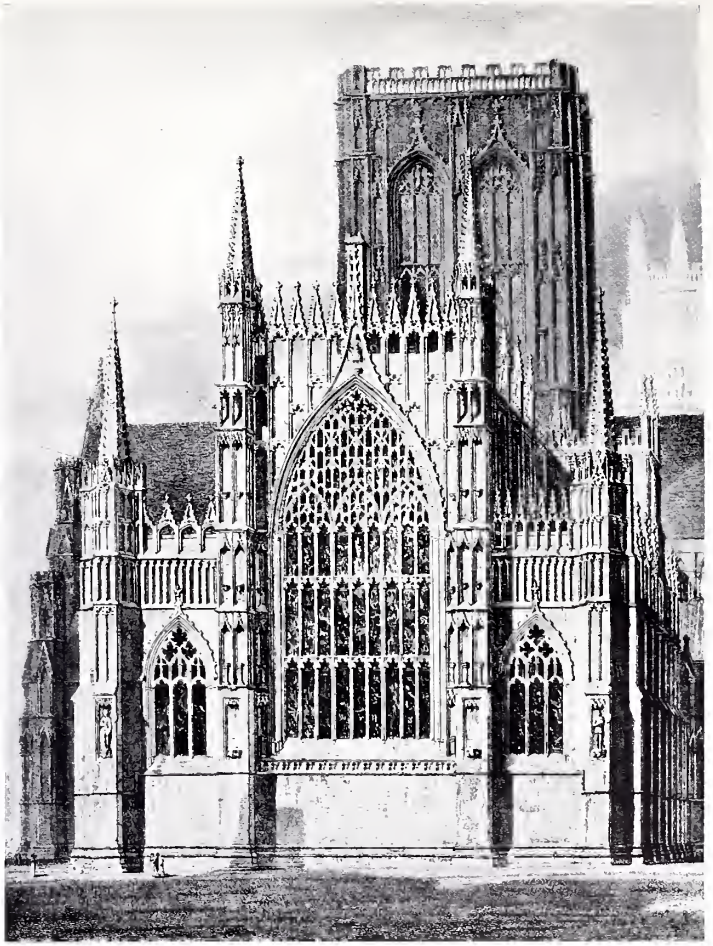
23. Gloucester Cathedral, the Cloisters. *From an engraving by B. Winkles after a drawing by K. Garland.*



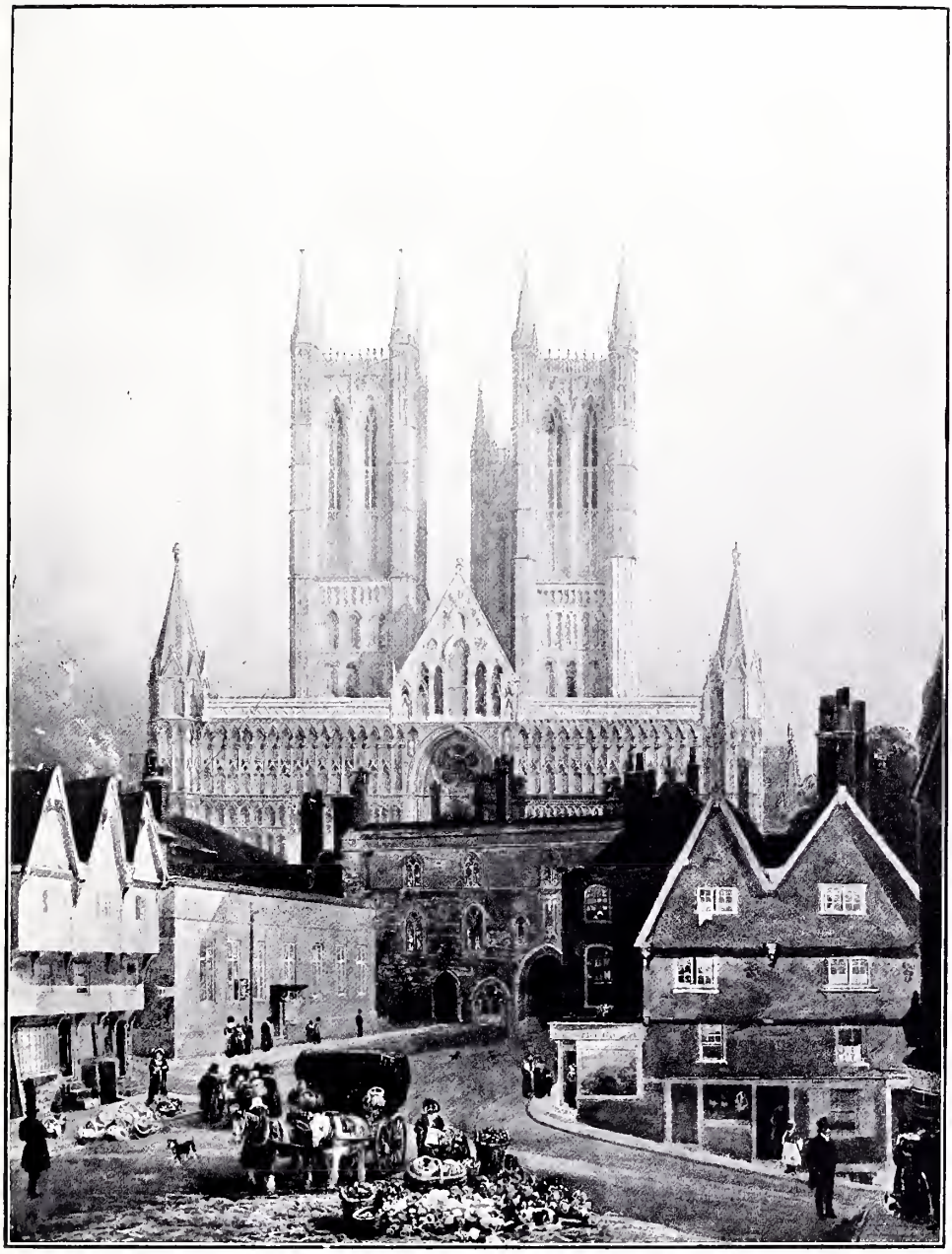
24. York Minster, the Quire. *From an engraving by E. Turrell after a drawing by F. Mackenzie.*



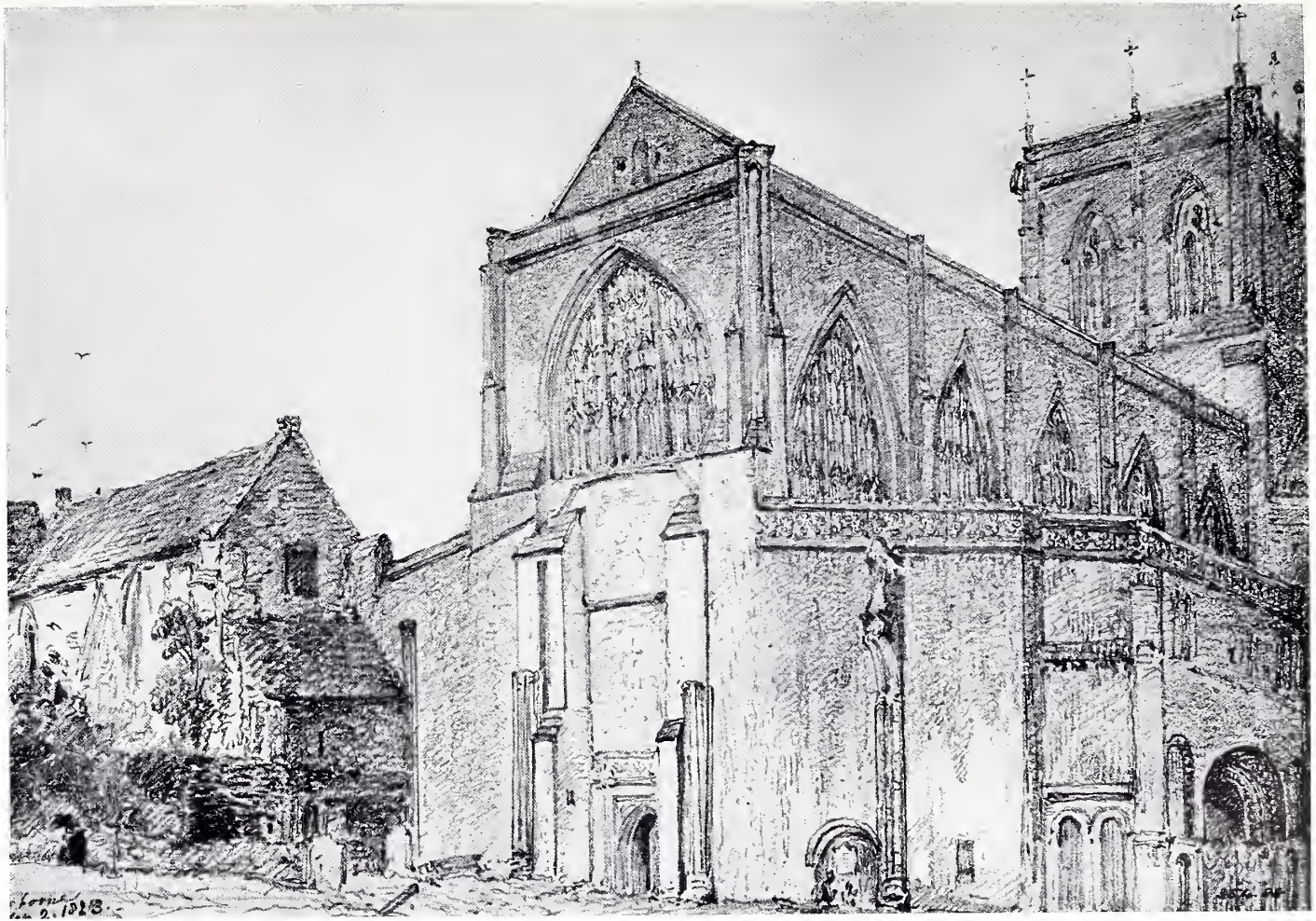
25. Winchester Cathedral, West Front. *From an engraving by B. Winkles after a drawing by R. Garland.*



26. York Minster, the East End. *From an engraving by J. le Keux after a drawing by F. Mackenzie.*



27. Lincoln Cathedral, the Western Towers. *From a drawing by P. de Wint. Victoria and Albert Museum.*



28. Sherborne Abbey. *From a drawing by J. Constable. Victoria and Albert Museum.*

## CHAPTER VII

# The Cathedral Builders up to the Dissolution of the Monasteries, 1400—1538

| | |
|---|---|
| Wakefield | 1320–1480 |
| Manchester | 1422–1535 |
| Newcastle | mostly 15th Century. |
| Gloucester (tower and lady chapel) | 1450–1500 |
| Norwich (spire and vaulting) | 1446–1510 |
| Durham (tower) | 1456–1474 |
| Chester (south transept and tower) | c. 1480 |
| Peterborough (east chapels) | 1470–1500 |
| Canterbury (tower) | c. 1495 |
| Winchester (lady chapel) | c. 1500 |
| Ripon (nave) | 1505–1538 |

THE stately architecture of royal and episcopal chapels was not, however, the characteristic building of the fifteenth century in England. What some districts have in greater abundance than others, but what no English county is without, are the parish-churches of Perpendicular style, which make practically the bulk of mediaeval architecture remaining in England. Many of them by their size and importance may take rank beside our smaller Cathedrals, and indeed the modern dioceses have taken them at Manchester, Newcastle, and Wakefield. So our discussion of Cathedral Builders may enter on a most interesting chapter of our English building.

As distinguished from the monastic building of the eleventh and twelfth centuries which lies at the origin of our cathedral architecture that of the Parish Church had, from the first, very different aims expressed in both plan and construction. I do not propose here to enter into the early features of this distinction—the square-ended sanctuaries, the projecting porches, the west towers of the early centuries; the long chancels, the cross-plans and narrow aisles of the thirteenth century;

the wide areas and lightly built arcades which in the fourteenth century parochial building borrowed from the Friars. The space will only allow reference to the broad distinctions between the churches of the people and monk respectively as in the fifteenth century they stood side by side, the one often as large in area as the other.

But in the two cases the area has been given to each by its builders in a different way. The monastic church was made of its bulk most often at its one first building and from an original set design : the parish church has grown to its dimensions, and this by a dozen or more buildings. By the end of the fourteenth century no doubt many renovations and alterations had been made to the monastic fabric—there had been alternate rebuildings of nave, quire and transept but by all of them the actual area of Abbey-church or cathedral had been scarcely enlarged ; the parish church, meanwhile, originally of the most diminutive area had expanded, and expanded by aisle and chantry additions and with porches and transepts projecting on both sides ; and then would again expand by a rebuilding absorbing all these additions into the new body, which again would throw out new aisles, transepts and porches, and be all rebuilt once more on a larger scheme.

An infinitude of varying plans have thus been created for our parish churches ; of some in Oxfordshire, it can hardly be said that they have any plan in their shape but are accretions of gratuitously placed chapels. Still by 1400 a certain uniformity was developed and the fifteenth century rebuildings took a certain shape which adapted and replaced the irregularities of their haphazard construction. For example, churches like those of Coventry, Lynn and Yarmouth, though they incorporate earlier fabrics, have a regular planning on a definite model. The whole area is made about a square, disposed as a lofty middle hall (lighted usually by a clerestory), with broad aisles running from end to end—the separations of nave and chancel and of the various chapels and chantries being produced only by screens. Projecting porches north and south and sometimes low transepts still further widen the proportions and break the external lines, but the one chief accent of the exterior is given by the lofty western tower ; most typically without a spire, though in the middle of England and Lincolnshire fifteenth century spires are common. Sometimes, as

at Boston and Wakefield, the long chancel of the fourteenth century remains without aisles : and occasionally the traditions of the cross church survive in central towers and distinct transepts. But the typical parish church is not a cross-church but a single big hall of square dimensions, whose area is roofed by the help of light arcades scarcely perceptible as divisions.

Now neither the churches of monks and canons, nor the cathedral building, whose origin and expression has been sketched in the preceding sections, can be looked to for the suggestion of this broad simple open hall. Nor were the earlier types of parish church of the pattern. However, the fourteenth century had seen another type of great church produced—that of the friars ; and though the remains of their churches are now extremely scanty, it is interesting to remember that every town of any importance in England once possessed its Franciscan Dominican and Austin Friars' churches, some nearly of cathedral size. In fact, masons were employed on these in the fourteenth century as often as on the monks' and canons' churches ; and when engaged on friars' churches would be the experimenters developing the English style. For the requirement of such church-building was, in its simplest form, a long hall which could accommodate the greatest number of people in one worship, for it was needed for city congregations and city-preaching. So independent were their churches of the cross-traditions of monastic plan that they were often built in two aisles equally roofed and divided by a single light arcade. Where they are preserved to us, as at Gloucester, we can at once recognize in them the origin of the parochial construction and the ideal which the parochial expansions of plan had in view. It is to be noted that the friars were the religious of the fifteenth century ; popularity and scandal equally acknowledged them as such, so the popular building would readily run into the mould of their making.

In the parish church of the fifteenth century, therefore, we are getting outside the circle of ideas to which both Romanesque and Gothic owed their expression in cathedral and abbey-churches. The expression of feudalism was growing weaker, and its personal exponents were of less account. The power of the monastic feudalism as represented in the Benedictine supremacy had been the biggest thing in the history

of civilization at the time; and so, too, the episcopal, regal and aristocratic dominations, which I have sketched as influencing architecture, had been despotic influences with the paramount sway of universal ideas. But now in the churches of the fifteenth century the religious expression of friar and latter-day monk, and the social sway of squire and trader—men of wealth and position though they were—had, in comparison with what had been, only a limited and local power. The old orders were losing ground, for the Black Death had so reduced the numbers of most monasteries, that their continuity of discipline and repute ceased; and they never got their full numbers again. Many were suppressed, and though Henry VI made an effort at new foundations, monastic revenues were being diverted to colleges and schools long before Henry VIII violently and finally dissolved the convents. At the same time the ancient feudal families were coming to an end. The French Wars killed them off in numbers and generally impoverished their estates, and the struggle of the Wars of the Roses still further reduced the ruling classes. The King's authority finally grew at their expense—but the middle classes advanced also: squires grew independent of their lords, and boroughs established their freedom and their trade.

So they were people who had come out from under the shadow of the old overmastering ideas who now were the patrons of architecture: and moreover, the crafts who were building churches were, as already described, on an equality with their clients. The fifteenth century parish church was essentially democratic in all its aspects. In the first place, it got its shape under no set scheme of privileged tradition, but under the common liberty of building out on all sides as coral communities build. Secondly, its arrangements all suggest the least exclusiveness of profession or condition: there is no boxing in of sacred areas by construction, but a wide admission of all to a full view of the altars; and the guilds (as comprehensive of the population generally as benefit clubs are to-day) had practically the proprietorship of fabric and services. Thirdly, its simplicities of construction were those of popular use; what local tastes were bred to admire; what local craftsmen produced and local quarries could supply. The roofing was not complicated by stone-vaults, but had the oak construction such as the

country crafts of carpentry or boat-building could easily compass. And from the neighbouring town came all the decoration and the fittings; glass for the windows; "tables" and painted panels for the walls and screens; the imagery of alabaster and bronze for the altars; the needlework and hangings of the sanctuaries; and all with the motives of local popular pageants and mystery plays, so that devils and angels were the favourite sculptures. The one feature, the one extravagance, that of the tower-building, had its popular significance, for the belfry was the communal symbol of the village community.

Under such conditions the expression of the crafts, as now thoroughly subdivided and organized, was formalized. It can be seen to have become that of guild- or shop-production, with hereditary recipes and established standards of workmanship. All that masonic invention which had run hotfoot from Romanesque to Perpendicular comes to a standstill with the inventions of the Gloucester mason. His cut and dried spacings of walls and window made architecture easy, claiming adoption on the score of their practical utility, for they could be applied to every problem of building, and give either a cheap magnificence or a serviceable plainness. His panels and niches might be repeated vertically or horizontally, making screens or windows and giving square practicable interstices, such as glazier, painter, and sculptor found it easy to use. The drooping or four-centered arch allowed cheap and easy roofings for carpenter and plumber in the completion of the building. So furnishers and decorators of this straight-forward mason's work could supply their stock patterns, their Saints and Virgins, for some hundred years in the same forms and with no need for change of practice, or for fresh inventions or adaptation. All which suited a commerce of church-fitting: the guild character of the fabric was echoed by the shop expression of its glass, sculpture and painting. Builders and furnishers gave cheap work for small purses, better stuff when well paid, but still kept up the respectable accomplishment of tradition.

On the other hand, while the craft invention of art slept, its applications grew varied, and the conditions of local convenience were able to play their parts in many combinations. As the product of local ambition, the parish churches grew in groups to local expressions of

considerable variety. This was particularly the case as to two distinct districts; one in the East of England, where trade grew very prosperous in the first half of the fifteenth century; the other a little later in its prosperity, the West country that drains to the Severn sea.

In Norfolk and Suffolk the number of great churches, sometimes two or three in a single hamlet which now has scarcely population to fill a tenth of their space, surprises visitors. Their art has a distinct flavour founded on the local supplies of flint, which when cut are used for the facing and edged with narrow pieces of stone, free-stone being got only by importation. None of these great Norfolk churches have as yet been taken for cathedral use: but the characteristic story of Wymondham may be mentioned as illustrating the circumstances that attended much of the largest parochial building. An important Benedictine abbey-church, it had a people's nave and rebuilt its quire and transept with an octagonal central tower in the fourteenth century. Thereupon the parish asserted itself, expelled the monks from the nave, built up the screen-wall against the conventual church as its east end, and to the west erected a typical Norfolk parish-church and a stately west tower, all on a fine scale. In the interior the magnificent oak roof with its ranges of great angels leaning half across the nave, still testifies to the vigour of the local east country carpenters. In such roofs we have what was the most original expression of late fourteenth and fifteenth-century architecture. The vaultings of the monastic era made no longer the ideal of church-builders: they returned to the open wood construction of the more ancient tradition. The wood-craft, late in the fourteenth century, developed the hammerbeam construction (which we see so finely in Westminster Hall), and most of the Norfolk and Suffolk churches (see especially those of Sall and Blythborough) have splendid specimens of carved timber, as well as screens and woodwork. In the transepts of Ely can be seen an example of this craft in Cathedrals.

In the west country the parish-church building of the fifteenth century is equally significant. The trade of the wool-merchants became prosperous towards the middle of the century, and hundreds of fine churches arose in Somerset and Wiltshire using the same building details that were current in all England but with distinctions of appli-

A Bishop carrying the Sacrament.
*From a LECTIONARY of the Fifteenth Century.*
*British Museum, Harl.* 7026.

cation that were local. The masons here were in possession of oolite stones, big in block, and sometimes coarse in texture as the Ham Hill and Doulting, and their building has a vigorous personality in its broad mouldings, deep buttresses, rich parapets and boldly carved gargoyles. Here again the tower is the characteristic achievement of the fifteenth-century masoncraft, continuing all the boldness and dexterity of the Gloucester building. The tower of St. Cuthbert's, Wells, and St. Mary's, Taunton, are examples, as well as the central tower of Gloucester Cathedral itself.

An example of west-country style on a cathedral scale to put beside the eastern example of Wymondham is to be found at Sherborne. Sherborne at any rate was once a Bishop's seat, and may be again, and its history illustrates the same point, too, as the abbey-church of the east-country, that new forces had risen against the old monastic ascendancy. The citizens of Sherborne, disputing as to their rights, as to bell-ringing and their baptisms in the nave of the abbey, set on fire the church of the monks. But the latter, having better fortune than those of Wymondham, got the better of the parishioners at law and expelled them from the church. The monks' rebuilding of their church, of which the above fire was an incident, has given us one of the most characteristic works of the English "Perpendicular" style. Its craft is distinctly that of the local mason who has got his art from the working of the Ham Hill stone, but with something beyond the village ambitions. For Sherborne has no carpenter's ceilings, like the west-country churches of Curry Rivel or Bere Regis, but as splendid a stretch of stone fan-vaulting, as rich and satisfying in the warm colour of its Ham Hill stone as any English vault.

In these splendid vaultings of the fifteenth century we have indeed the last word of the English monastic art. The rich lierne coverings of the Norwich nave, transepts and quire, with their many hundred bosses carved with sacred emblems and scenes, and the smaller but equally striking ceilings of Winchester and Gloucester Lady-Chapels, are examples of the magnificent craftsmanship which was at the disposal of the larger monastic foundations right up to the Dissolution. The fan-vaultings, though they started in the monastic use of the Gloucester cloister, seem, in the fifteenth century, to have appeared generally in

the chapels and halls of that kingly and official building which our last chapter sketched, e.g. in the Divinity Hall at Oxford, in St. George's chapel at Windsor, in the King's College chapel at Cambridge and in the memorial chapel of Henry VII at Westminster. Still not only at Sherborne, but in the quire of the Oxford Augustinians (now the Cathedral), and in the east chapels of Peterborough are splendid examples.

In the fifteenth century the monks' churches in many ways show their exclusiveness yielding to popular pressure: we have, for example, the rebuildings of the nave of Crowland Abbey, c. 1430, and of Ripon Minster, as late as 1503. Significantly in the last moments of monastic existence there appears an eagerness on the part of the monks to play the wise steward, and, ere they were dismissed, to make friends with popular architecture. At Canterbury, the Bell-Harry tower of Cardinal Morton was a bid for popular recognition. At Fountains and at Furness Cistercian Abbeys, which had for near 400 years eschewed the glory of steeples, in their latest age before the Dissolution each raised a lofty bell-tower. At Bolton the Augustinians started to build just such another, but the dismissal came ere they had got it above the first storey.

The three great parish-churches which have now the dignity of being Cathedrals are each in their way characteristic of the latest English Builders, who made a homely satisfying product out of their insular adaptation of Gothic forms, not without a dignity arising from its simplicity. Newcastle Cathedral is a special example of the straightforward spaciousness of "Perpendicular" stonework, and its tower and open-broached spire has just the sort of dexterous ingenuity that would please guild masoncraft. Wakefield and Manchester have lost more by restoration and rebuilding. The first was a typical specimen of the late fourteenth-century creation of a parish-church, with a long dignified chancel and its tower and crocketed spire of Midland pattern. Manchester, though too completely restored to be a specimen of fifteenth-century masoncraft, still suggests in its plan the features which have been sketched as elemental for the parish-church design. Its five aisles, porch and chapel projections, speak of the constant enlargements of chantry foundation. Moreover, the collegiate endowment (so commonly given

in the fifteenth-century churches as the nucleus of their varied services of guilds and chantries), has handed down to us a splendid feature of fifteenth-century art in its Canons' stalls. In the collegiate foundations, and in many of our secular cathedrals, the last phase of English Gothic style preserved the traditions of mediaeval furniture well into the sixteenth century. Thus at Ripon, Manchester and Beverley, the stalls dated from 1500 to 1520, keep their character as translations of the stone canopies, which the Gloucester and Tewkesbury masons set up one hundred and fifty years earlier. And the beautiful workmanship and finish of the stall work are set off by a dexterous pictorial style of wood-carving which has in it something of the Japanese niello-workers. Indeed Manchester with its well preserved rood-screen, shows as perfect mediaeval church furniture as any of our Cathedrals. The survival of wood-craft is the link by which the mediaeval arts of England were without any disconnecting joined with those of the Italian Renaissance. Stalls, still Gothic in their construction, as at church, Hampshire, begin to show classic ornaments, while at King's College, Cambridge, in 1534, they have elegant Renaissance detail throughout.

## CHAPTER VIII

# The English Cathedrals in the Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

| | |
|---|---|
| Durham (stalls and font cover) . . . . . | 1663 |
| Old St. Paul's, London (facing by Inigo Jones) . . . | 1633 |
| New St. Paul's „ (by Sir Christopher Wren) . | 1675–1717 |

THE architecture of English church-building came to a stop with the desecration of religious churches that followed on the dissolution of the monasteries. Great churches were, in fact, a drug on the market, when every hamlet had some monks' or canons' church in its vicinity and every city some two or three friars' churches that had gone out of use. Henry VIII could have made twenty more dioceses nor lacked churches as stately as Gloucester or Chester for their cathedrals. As it was, his new Bishops took over the above two Benedictine churches with that of Peterborough, and the two Augustinian churches of Bristol and St. Frideswide's, Oxford; while at Canterbury, Winchester, Rochester, Worcester, Norwich, Ely, Durham and Carlisle, the monastic cathedrals, were given Deans and Chapters, as well as Bishops. These fourteen became the cathedrals of the New Foundation : but while their fabrics were kept, the clearing away of the monastic institutions, and of shrines, whose wealth the King confiscated, led to a wide destruction of decorations and furniture. As far as altar-fittings and the images and paintings were concerned, the secular cathedrals, whose constitutions, being unaltered, are called of the Old Foundation, fared, of course, as badly.

In such an upset of religious practices the old body of the church-furnishing arts passed away for a time, and the craft of the masons and of the other building trades went into secular use. The money taken from the monasteries was given to the erection of

great Elizabethan manor-houses and palaces, which had their samples in Henry VIII's Hampton Court and "Non-such," and were the English equivalent of the Italian villa and the French *château.* But nothing of the nature of a cathedral was built new in England from Bath Abbey[1] till St. Paul's—a space of 150 years. Only in the University cities of Oxford and Cambridge was there a building of chapels in connexion with college foundations; elsewhere the churches left from the mediaeval centuries were amply sufficient for the accommodation of the reformed services.

But when the destruction of roods and images, and the suppression of guilds and chantries was over, there returned at pious hands a refurnishing—particularly in connexion with the musical services of our cathedrals. In character and beauty alike, this fifteenth- and sixteenth-century work has claims against the dismissal given it by church-historians and church-restorers. Far from the traditions of Gothic craft ending abruptly with the dissolution of the monasteries in England, there was a remarkable vitality in two departments of the mediaeval arts,[2] on which the introduction of reformed services in churches had little or no effect. The monuments erected in memory of princes, nobles and squires, if no longer chantries with altars and saints' niches, for a time hardly deviated from the old forms, and were, right on till 1700, made as canopies of architectural construction supported on piers, while the tomb itself and its effigy preserved for long the mediaeval motives of a recumbent figure on a bier or sarcophagus.

Indeed, until Inigo Jones, in the taste of his Italian education, made Nicolas Stone his sculptor, mediaeval figure-sculpture may be said to have survived in England. Examples of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century monuments and effigies are numerous in many parts of England, and in the churches attached to some seat of a royal or noble family, as Framlingham in Suffolk, or Boreham in Essex, are remarkable works. Westminster Abbey has in its chapels many tombs preceding the coarser heavier types of the eighteenth-century. Salis-

[1] Begun in 1500, Bath Abbey-church was roofless for some years after the dissolution of the monastery, and was not completely covered in till 1610.

[2] See the excellent chapters xiv. and xv. in Blomfield's *History of Renaissance Architecture in England.*

bury Cathedral keeps an especially fine specimen in the Hertford tomb; and St. Patrick's, Dublin, one of the largest in the Boyle monument, an erection of four stories with forty figures, which it is to be observed was set up originally in the place of the high altar and removed therefrom by the agency of Laud and Strafford. Of course, many of the Jacobean monuments were of foreign marbles and direct importations from the Low Countries. In London foreigners established agencies and then workshops, such for example as Stevens, c. 1580, who is said by Walpole to have been a Dutchman. But the large quantity of painted stone erections of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries remaining in churches of all parts of England, and the many local varieties of their treatment, point to a native production influenced slowly by foreign importations. Moreover, a regular procession of detail can be traced in their ornaments. The mediaeval panellings and niches do not get displaced all at once, see for example at Arundel the large Purbeck chantry of c. 1560. The classic ornaments come at first as frillings and veneers; and when pillars and entablatures become the constructive parts, even then the scheme of the monument retains the tradition of the fifteenth-century design.[3]

The other craft which preserved its mediaeval traditions without a break through the religious revolution, was that of the wood-wright. In the timber houses of Lancashire, Cheshire and the Severn Valley, as well as in those of Essex, Kent and Sussex, the mediaeval carpenters' craft went on for three centuries,[4] and as in the open roofs of the halls of Hampton Court (c. 1532), so in the Middle Temple in London in Trinity College, Cambridge, and at Lambeth, made hammer-beam constructions as of fifteenth-century churches, only with pendants and other adventitious ornaments of classic detail. In churches what we have of this dexterous wood-craft of the mediaeval tradition is mostly in screens, pulpits and pew-fronts. To these Italian ornament had access before the dissolution of the monasteries, as can be seen in the chests on the screen of Winchester Cathedral, in the stalls at

[3] See at Croydon, side by side, the Wareham monument (c. 1480), and that of Archbishop Whitgift (1604), the latter an exact translation into current classic of the mediaeval construction.

[4] There was a barn built at Harrow in 1820 which is quite a mediaeval framing of timber.

Christchurch, Hants, and the screen and stalls of King's College Chapel, Cambridge; yet the traditional ornaments of Perpendicular woodwork survived with extraordinary persistence in the local work—as in many church screens in the north of England; in Carlisle Cathedral, at Brancepeth and Hexham in Durham and at Cartmel in Lancashire, the last to be dated as late as 1618. In Norfolk, at Walpole St. Peter, near Wisbech, the church retains its whole furniture of sixteenth-century screens and pews in perfect order, and they show no break of mediaeval tradition. Many other eastern churches had furniture of a skilled craftsmanship of the early seventeenth century (such as the font cover of Terrington St. Clement's), while Devon and Cornwall have been nearly as rich in such preservations. To the discredit of all concerned, however, many of these east and west country churches[5] have had this characteristic woodwork of carved panels and pew ends cleared out and cut up for fire-wood; its dishonoured fragments can be discovered in the sheds of the country builders.

After 1600 the generation just anterior to the Civil Wars saw many works of fine craftsmanship in screens and pulpits, introduced into churches, and one may be allowed to refer to four of them in different parts of England as illustrating the wide area of this artistic activity. St. John's Church, Leeds, was built and fitted c. 1634, and retains (with some alteration) the whole of its valuable furniture, of which the great oak screen is a splendid piece of ornamental carpentry. West Stafford church, close to Dorchester, was a perfect example of a similar religious work, complete in all its effect, pews, screen and pulpit, but an unfortunate enlargement of the chancel has lately tampered with it. In Herefordshire, the home of a long survival of mediaeval woodcraft (as seen in timber houses, market halls and the porches of churches), we have the name of John Abel, master carpenter, associated with the screen of Abbey Dore church. This Cistercian abbey had been left in ruin till 1634, when John Viscount Scudamore fitted it up for service, reroofed and repewed it, and it is now the one Cistercian quire that remains in religious use. In north Lancashire

[5] A collection of takings from churches has been shown in a London exhibition. It did not transpire that any steps were taken to have the discarded ornaments replaced.

the refitting of the old Augustinian quire of Cartmel in 1618 by George Preston was on similar lines, and has the splendid screen-work which I have already named.

In the case of our cathedrals, Oxford and Winchester retain fine pulpits, but generally there is now scarcely a fragment of what was a remarkable historical phase of our church architecture. During the Commonwealth in the religious raid which Dowsing and his fellows waged against the works of Popery, this new furniture was particularly obnoxious to the Puritans and suffered accordingly. In cathedrals, the frequent quartering of Cromwellian soldiers led to many destructions, and much ancient glass and many monuments disappeared. But again following the Restoration came a repair of dilapidations, and a vigorous refurnishing of churches. The furniture which the zeal of Bishop Cosin gave to the Cathedral and his chapel in Durham is remarkable for the Gothic tradition and Gothic detail which it keeps. In the cathedral quire its stallwork can still be seen, though sadly maltreated in 1873, and the font-cover in the nave is a remarkable work, though the font of Cosin has been filched from it. There is more of Cosin's work unaltered at Bishop Auckland Chapel, and the similar furniture and screens in the churches of Sedgefield and Eaglescliffe, late as was their execution, still give all the glow of Gothic life to the fabrics which retain them.

In numbers of our churches, at the end of the seventeenth century and during part of the eighteenth, were set up solid sober works of English craftsmanship, which nineteenth-century purism has now for the most part thrust out. The fervour of "Revival" Gothic has made its fanatics shameless iconoclasts. The restoring horde, as very Vandals, have broken down the sanctuaries of beauty that George Herbert celebrated, and, if one may continue the metaphor, have set up therein the fetishes of a commercial worship. Our cathedrals have been specially exposed to the onslaughts of "barbarians." From Hereford the "Grecian" quire-screen of 1700 was taken in 1841. From Chichester, in 1860, "for the decoration of the Cathedral" in memory of Dean Chandler, the Arundel screen was plucked away, involving the fall of the spire, and with the screen was destroyed the beautiful seventeenth-century organ-case, whose memory is preserved

by a painting. From Canterbury in 1878 the "substantial and elegant" chancel-enclosures of Charles the Second's time were removed. At Lincoln in 1894 the architect Pearson proposed the pulling down of the characteristic library and cloister of Sir Christopher Wren; the Chapter agreed, and it was only with difficulty saved. In 1904 what was the last work of the traditional glass-painting of England has been cut out of the west window of Exeter. It is to be noted that these destructions have had no purpose of necessary repairs, or of any substantial or lasting requirements of service[6]: for the screens removed have now been uniformly replaced by others. It is difficult at first sight to account for this virulent iconoclasm in respect of ornaments so excellent in their workmanship, so religious in the motive of their execution. The arts of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as far as they are painting, sculpture and engraving, hold the highest places in the estimate of artists: as far as they are furniture, plate and jewellery they have now an extraordinary value in the eyes of the collector; but when what is honoured elsewhere has appeared in our churches, it has been treated as rubbish and thrown into the dust heap.

I believe this to be the reason. Art, which had been a natural expression of life, has in the last three centuries become a matter of the taste, not the necessity, of craft. It has grown fanciful and fastidious, wants ever a new dish to tickle its appetite: shows disgust at what went before and destroys it at all hazards. The English churchman acquired, in the nineteenth century, a neo-Gothic taste, just as his predecessor had a neo-Classic. The one has hated the other, but is his true son all the same. His title to cusps, tracery and angels is of just the same validity as that which the eighteenth-century churchman had for his orders, entablatures, and cherubs: it has been just a matter of taste in Art with both.

Now as the High Priest of taste beside and behind the craftsman in the story of Cathedral Builders there had appeared in the seventeenth century the "architect." London has a splendid and complete example in illustration of this appearance in the building of St. Paul's

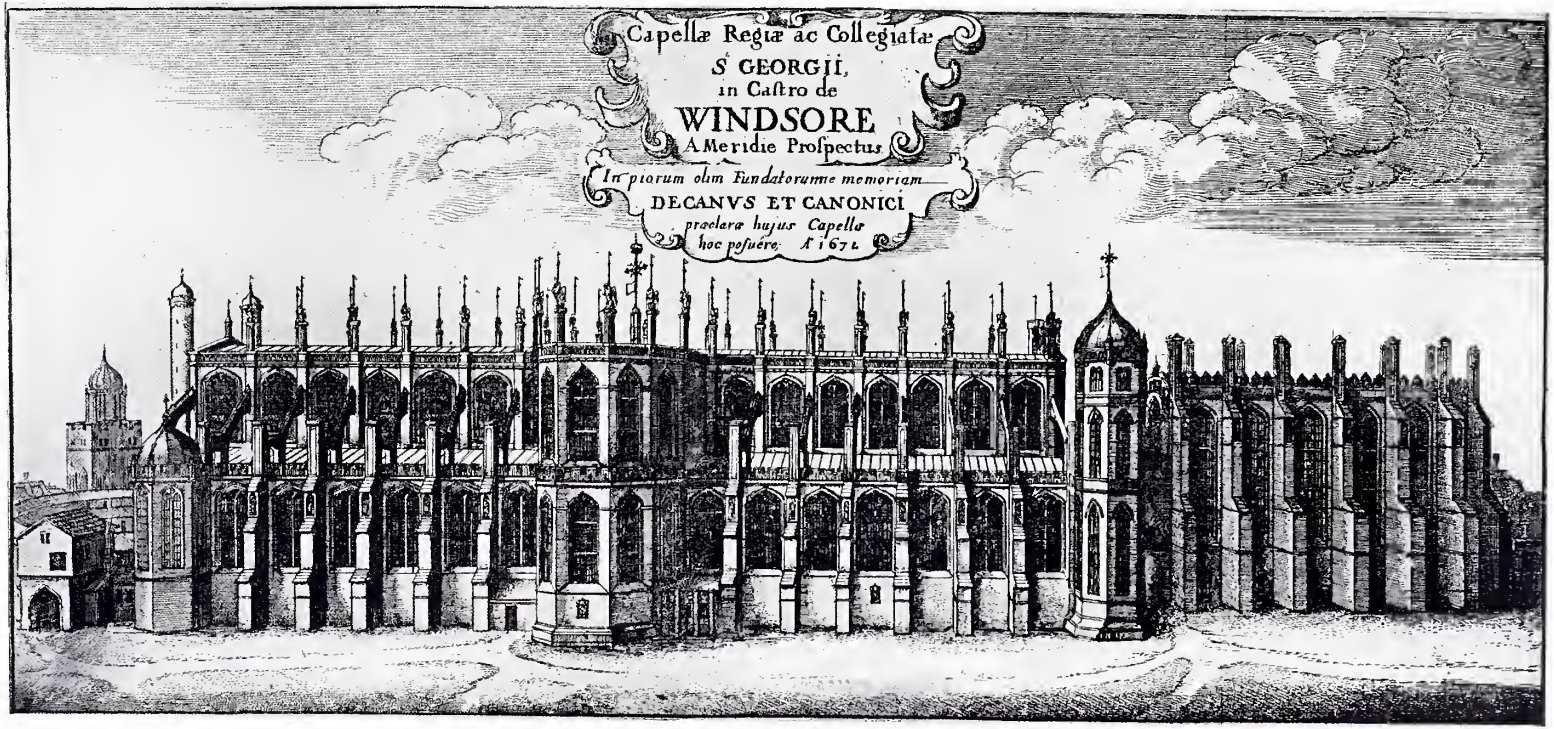
[6] See Dr. Cox's summary of nineteenth-century work in cathedrals, published in the *Archaeological Journal* of 1897.

by Sir Christopher Wren. If not the earliest to act as a designer of building with the "architect's" intention, I think he may be called the first to assume the whole rôle, since he claims (in his letter to the Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge) to be the first to draw full-size details. The craftsman thereafter was to be in the matter of handling, as well as in that of general design, the executing machine of a superior intelligence, and in this latter capacity Sir Christopher Wren may rank, if not really as the first, yet as the greatest of English architects.

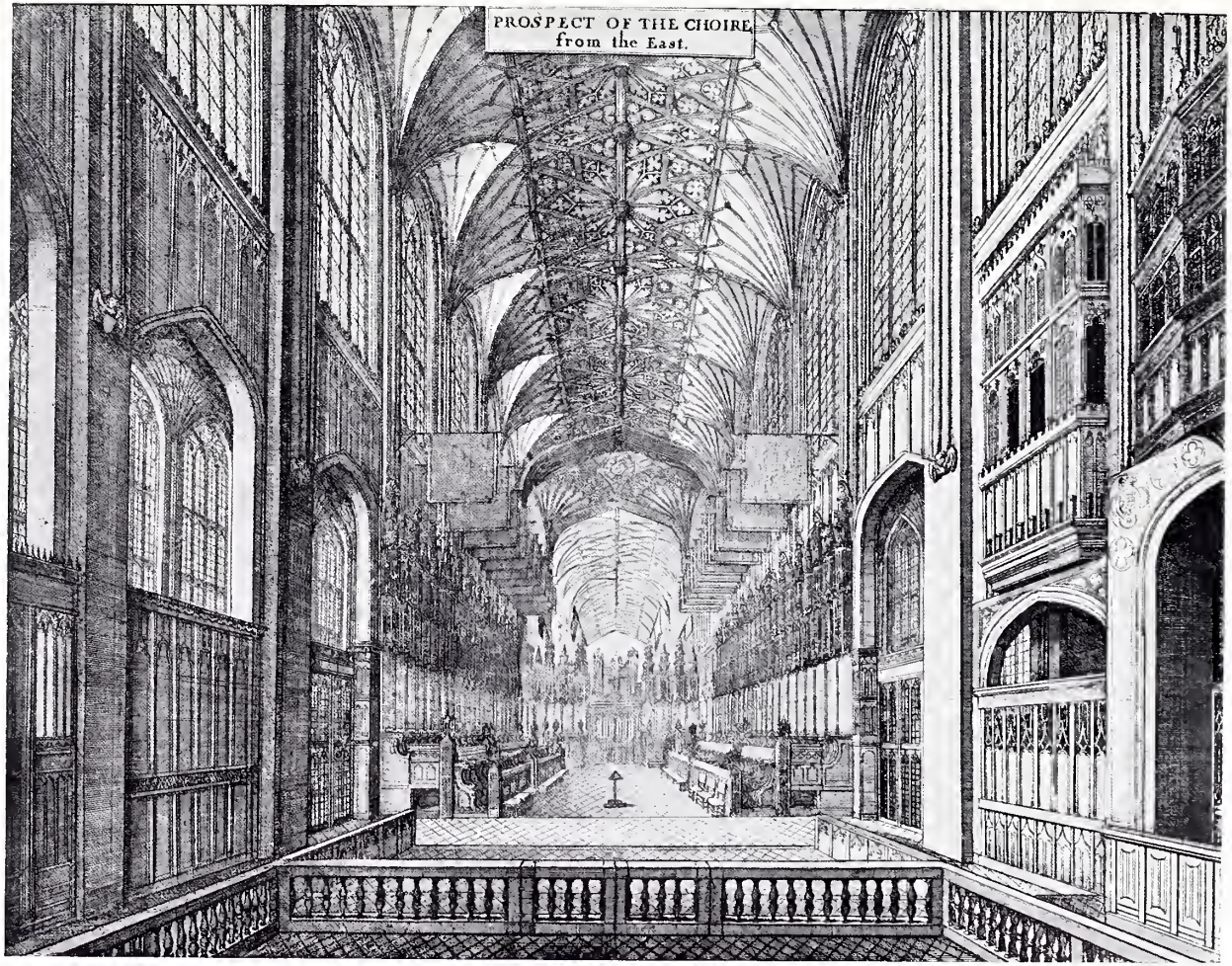
St. Paul's Cathedral is a wonderful building when viewed as the production of a directing intelligence, controlling and dominating the execution of craftsmen. It is so completely master of its effects: by the masterful marshalling of its masons, its sculptors, its wood-carvers and its smiths, learning of style, and engineering of material have been combined for one continuous sustained effort, as if in the successful accomplishment of a military campaign. St. Paul's Cathedral proclaims its architect as a consummate general.

In such a character Sir Christopher Wren comes as the successor to William of Wykeham, but with this difference. In the fourteenth century both the craft and style of the work were those of the masons: Wykeham could make no difference in them. Here, however, though the craft of each mason, carpenter and craftsman was his own, the combinations and details of their work were those of an imposed calculated scene prepared for them by the designer. It is interesting to see how distinctly the "architect" when he made his appearance in England came in the guise of the scene-painter. Inigo Jones,[7] who in English architecture was the first to put the classic orders learnedly and determinately upon a building, seems to have had no builder's education, nor indeed till the last half of his life much connexion with building. His education in Italy left him a dabbler in mechanics, especially as to stage scenery, and his jump into distinction lay in his introducing the Italian shifts for the Masques which made so much of the gaiety of James the First's Court. In drawing designs for the architecture of paste-board and canvas he developed the capacity for its permanent realization in stone, and so founded the race of paper-designers. And

[7] He was born in 1573, but the first definite notice of his connexion with building was not till 1612.




29. St. George's Chapel, Windsor, from the South. *From the engraving by W. Hollar.*




30 St. George's Chapel, Windsor, the Quire. *From the engraving by W. Hollar.*

31. St. Paul's Cathedral, West Front. *From an engraving by Thomas Malton.*

32. St. Paul's Cathedral, the Quire. *From an engraving by Robert Trevitt.*

33. Truro Cathedral, from the South-East. *From a photograph by Frith.*

the character of scene-shifter has stuck to the profession of "architects," and has particularly assisted them to assume the direction of taste and lead it on from one fancy to another, from one demand for superficial quality to the next. Has not the succession of modern styles in architecture been just a shifting of canvas and properties ?

As regards Cathedrals, Inigo Jones in 1633 hung a drop-curtain of stone upon the west front of the old St. Paul's Cathedral. But after the Fire of London the new St. Paul's was no mere designing of faces. Wren had along with the scholarship of the "Grecian" style a practical comprehension of the planning of architecture, and a passion for the engineering of construction. Since his day these qualities, scholarship, ingenuity and structural imagination have made the solid equipment of the architect, and on these grounds has been for the last three centuries his use to the community.

London Cathedral has for our story of Cathedral Builders the grand distinction of illustrating the "architect" in English art in his clearest, cleanest function. The fire of 1666 did two things for Sir Christopher Wren: by giving him the rebuilding of so many churches, it allowed him to raise and marshal a body of craftsmen in church-building for the great representative work : then since it practically destroyed the mediaeval St. Paul's, he was able to make his new cathedral the full expression of seventeenth-century churchmanship. Its planning suits our services more efficiently, I think, than that of our Gothic fabrics, and all its aspects have the same complete and happy reflection of the best art of its time. For the London of 1700 the silver-grey of the Portland stone rising above the red brick squares and terraces with their russet tilings made a colour picture that has not been completely spoilt till our own day. Its classic style has the English solidity and contempt of fripperies—the grand sober manner of old courtesy: while the engineering capacity is shown in the dexterous management of the dome, and the care given on all sides to constructive craft. Moreover, its defects of logical construction, such as the sham outer dome and the false curtains of the upper story, that conceal the aisle roofs, are reflective too. They give us just the sturdy English contempt of theoretic conclusions, and also that paper ingenuity of design which has made the architect's standpoint for three hundred years.

## CHAPTER IX

# The Cathedral Builders of the Nineteenth Century

| | |
|---|---|
| Chichester (spire by Scott) . . . . . | 1862–1865 |
| Bristol (nave by Street) . . . . . | 1875–1888 |
| Truro (quire and transept by Pearson) . . . | 1882–1887 |

CATHEDRALS have come into the story of nineteenth-century architecture, first by their religious use and their "restoration" in the case of those of the "Old" and "New" foundation; and secondly, as to fabrics built for monastic, collegiate and parochial use, by their adoption as cathedrals for modern dioceses. In only one case, that of Truro, has there been what can be called a new nineteenth-century building of an English Cathedral of the Established Church. The nineteenth-century possession of cathedral fabrics has meant their repair, a very general refurnishing, some rebuilding, and in two or three cases considerable additions.

The facts of this furnishing, adaptation, and rebuilding can be summed up as the work of the professional architect,[1] and the style of it all as that of the Gothic revival. In respect of the building work, this falls into two divisions—that of new design and that of "restoration." As to the new building, its essence in the nineteenth century cannot be separated from that of Wren's building at St. Paul's, or that of the architects of the numerous churches, whether Palladian in the eighteenth century or Greek in the beginning of the nineteenth century. There has been in all of these works the same selection of a stage effect; the same assimilation of the detail and expression of a fixed period of ancient art, and the same comprehension of the whole

[1] I need not vary this description because at St. Alban's an amateur like Lord Grimthorpe has acted as architect; or that at Norwich its Dean professes to proceed without one.

scheme by the intellect and taste of the dictating architect. It has been just part of the play that at one time the Grecian and at another the Gothic style is put up behind the footlights: the adaptation to the actual needs has been as loose in the case of aisles and chapels as in that of porticoes and classic orders. As to building execution, however, one must observe that Wren's artisans had their art nearer the tradition of its craft-origin, and developed classicisms in a natural cult, that was universal to West Europe. The neo-Gothic crafts had no such foundation of universal opinion. Revival builders had in England to breed their workmen by an artificial culture, and this put upon the architect a burden of artistic and constructional creation greater often than he could bear.

Taking it all in all the new Truro Cathedral of the nineteenth century is a not unworthy representation of the ambitions and faculties of the nineteenth-century architect. It has an expression of culture, and here and there some invention of design. It is true that to the building sense there seems to have been a flagrant misuse of opportunity. But the nineteenth century has taken little note of building, and classed it with practical ugliness. So to a country, where from the material of the hills a cathedral could have been built with a dignity and a generous local expression from the rough dressed granite, there was brought the cheese-cut Bath stone of commerce—the mildest vehicle of jerry-building ambition. This, however, is only to say that Pearson, as a nineteenth-century architect, was held tight in the chains of his professional status. Having learnt his Lincoln Cathedral, and made his reputation by its imitations, he could only use a stone in which the Lincoln detail could be worked. The popular and successful architect was obliged to repeat himself and give his clients what they had been trained to expect. By Pearson the life of Gothic is revived as a drama in acts. One sees the whole style of "Early English," its pauses and phases one by one. Though in Truro quire built straight away, they succeed one another as if a century were fancied between the scenes; as if masons worked and grew old and their children learned a new craft in the wings of the theatre.

It is difficult at first to realize what a peculiar artificiality the latter end of the nineteenth century has demanded in place of the simple needs

of church building. But the key to the nimbleness and triviality shown by the popular church architects can be found in the treatment of the old Cathedrals, for all the qualities which have made nineteenth-century success in church building have been learned in "restoration." The copying of architectural style is always an attempt to create a stage-effect and restore what is not by a show. The church architect has so been educated as a mimic, and the minuteness and fidelity of his attitudes can be seen in Scott's rebuilding of Chichester spire and Street's building of Bristol nave.

Still that professional qualities have sharpened themselves in our nineteenth-century treatment of Cathedrals is not the chief thing to be noted. Larger forces have given importance to the Cathedral masses of mediaeval masonry and are reflected in the methods of those who have dealt with them. Three revivals have marked the nineteenth century: first, the religious revival which, in one of its phases was called the Oxford movement, but passed far outside the limit of that title: secondly, the architectural revival, which has been sketched above: and thirdly the commercial revival. In the names and by the forces of these movements the English Cathedrals have been what is called "restored," that is revived, religiously, architecturally, and commercially. There has been good and evil in the process. The religious movement has made our churches habitable, cleansed them and ordered them into decency and respect. The architectural revival has stimulated the knowledge of ancient art, led to preservations, and given an esteem for every fragment of it left. The commercial revival has induced many crafts to return to processes and habits of manufacture forgotten or laid aside.

But these gifts to decency, to archaeology and to craft, however we may rate them, cannot in the view of the artist atone for the terrible treatment of the beauties of mediaeval art. "Revivalists" and "Restorers," instead of expending their theories on new creations, have turned them to the destruction of our Cathedrals. The fervour of the ecclesiolgist was especially deadly in his aesthetic exaltation of Gothic art. The tenet that the style of this building was religious, and the corollary that its best style was the most religious, has worked untold havoc. The idea has handed churches over to the constructional

archaeologist, who not content with our Cathedrals as they came down to us, has wished to make them what they ought to have been. For a hundred years Wyatt, Cottingham, Austin, Scott, Grimthorpe, Christian, Street, Blomfield and Pearson have been working with ideas which deliberately put a new in place of the mediaeval beauty. Salisbury, Durham, Hereford, Worcester, Rochester, Southwark, Chester, Peterborough, Norwich, and Bristol have been renewed by works between which, in that respect, there is nothing to choose. In the parish-churches what has been done under architects has really now destroyed the mediaeval quality entirely. Often has it done more than this: it has wiped out the most significant records of religious and national life when it has made empty and valueless the witness of our English churches. As regards national history one can instance two churches where foolish treatment in the last fifteen years has deprived the cities in which they stand of impressive monuments. Falmouth parish church had its fabric and fittings expressive of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century life, to which the town owed its foundation: now it has been swept out and Gothicized. Londonderry has a famous story, of how its citizens once saved their faith but their descendants have not been steadfast enough to keep their Cathedral in witness of it. An indecorous chancel has smeared over with worthless Gothic fripperies the stern expression of 1689.

What commercial activity has done to the furnishing of Cathedrals is as regretable. The trades of "Revival" church-furnishing have introduced screens, pulpits, lecterns, stalls, organ-cases, monuments and painted glass which from the art point of view are surely the most puerile and degraded class of objects ever placed in a religious building. And so this furniture of "Revivalism" makes a sad break in the continuity of religious art, for whereas the best of each age went into the church in former centuries, in the nineteenth the occasions on which the art of our times has been allowed access to Cathedrals can be counted on the fingers.

The works of our English painters and sculptors have stood high in the count of English accomplishments of the nineteenth century, and during the last thirty years, as already pointed out, the commercial revival has stimulated craft till the art of it has again appeared. But the Cathedral has seldom got the best of nineteenth-century art, or

nineteenth-century craft: it has scoffed at our painters, and discouraged the independent craftsman. The Wellington monument in St. Paul's of Alfred Stevens for long stood the one and only representative work of the nineteenth-century artist in our Cathedrals; but the splendid glass of Morris and Burne Jones in the Cathedral at Oxford and in what is the latest made Cathedral, St. James's, Birmingham, give us now other specimens.

It would seem that the religious and architectural revivals of the nineteenth century found in the sincerity of modern art its inadmissibility into churches. Under a mistaken fear as to the incongruity of modern ideas with mediaeval aspects, "Revivalism" has accepted only reproductions of the arts of the Ages of Faith. But in so doing it has admitted what, I think, has been a greater incongruity: for if the most modern conceptions of religious responsibility in art are not those which made the Cathedral a monument of ancient religion, at any rate they are less repellent to it than the patent insincerity of the trade-art that has been admitted. By straining at the gnat but swallowing the camel, furnishing of Cathedrals has taken to its breast the worst feature of the commercial revival, its insensibility to all considerations but those of commercial profit. As long as Restorers got crockets, cusps and traceries, as long as the outward shapes were those shown in books as Gothic, it has condoned the absence of inner grace, of honesty and craft-love—and this in religious art! The irony of the situation has been that admiration for the religious arts of the Middle Ages has now pretty well put them out of sight.

# INDEX


Abbey Dore, 43, 44, 101
Adel Church, 12, 36
Alan of Walsingham, 57, 74
Amiens Cathedral, 61, 64, 66, 67, 68
Angevin Builders, 37
Architects, Cathedral, 58, 103
Architecture, English Cathedral—
  Norman, 11, 27 and sqq.
  Transitional, 12, 37 and sqq.
  Early English, 12, 50 and sqq.
  Summit, 13, 60 and sqq.
  Decorated, 13, 70 and sqq.
  Perpendicular, 13, 70, 81, 83 and sqq.
  English Renaissance, 14, 99 and sqq.
" Artifices." *See* Craftsmen
Arundel Church, 100
Augustinians, The. *See* Monastic Architecture

Barfreston, Church, 12, 36
Bath Abbey, 79, 87, 99
Beauvais Cathedral, 66
Bedale, 77
Benedictines, The. *See* Monastic Architecture
Bere Regis Church, 95
Beverley Minster, 55, 76, 77, 80
Binham Abbey, 65, 66
Birmingham Cathedral, 110
Bishop Auckland, 102
Black Death, The, 38, 74, 76, 78, 81, 83, 84, 92
Blythborough Church, 94
Bolton Priory, 96
Boreham Church, 99
Brakespear Nicholas, 38
Brancepeth Church, 101
Bridlington Abbey, 76
Bridport Church, 87
Bristol Cathedral, 15, 44, 74, 78, 79, 80, 108
Brittany, The Churches of, 72
Buildwas Abbey, 41
Bury St. Edmunds Abbey, 28, 29, 87

Cambrai, 66
Cambridge—King's College Chapel, 13, 88, 96, 97, 101 ; Trinity College Hall, 100
Canterbury Cathedral, 27, 28, 29, 31, 33, 46, 48, 53, 58, 85, 96, 103
Carlisle Cathedral, 29, 76, 101
Cartmel Church, 101, 102
Castle Acre, 36, 40
Chartres Cathedral, 39, 68
Chester Cathedral, 15, 98
Chichester Cathedral, 14, 27, 32, 33, 48, 53, 84, 87, 108
Christchurch Priory, 85, 97
Churches, Parish and Monastic, 89–92
Cistercians, The. *See* Monastic Architecture
Citeaux Abbey, 40, 41
Clairvaux Abbey, 40, 41
Cluniacs, The. *See* Monastic Architecture, 36, 39, 40
Cluny Abbey, 29
" Cementarii." *See* Craftsmen
Cologne Cathedral, 15, 64
Colour, Use of, by the Mediaeval Builders, 18, 19, 32, 33
Cosin, Bishop, 14, 102
Craftsmen, The, 22, 23, 33, 43, 47, 49, 55, 56, 57, 58, 66, 68, 74, 79, 88, 92, 103
Crowland Abbey, 28, 96
Crypt, The, in Norman Cathedrals, 31
Curry Rivel Church, 95
Cwmhir Abbey, 43, 44

Dublin, Christchurch and St. Patrick's Cathedrals, 44, 100
Dunmow, 73
Durham Cathedral, 27, 29, 31, 32, 33, 35, 39, 41, 49, 51, 52, 55, 82, 102

Eaglescliffe Church, 102
Edington, Bishop of Winchester, 84, 85, 87
Edington Church, 84
Eleanor, Queen, Statues of, 21, 68
Elias de Dereham, 56, 57
Ely Cathedral, 27, 28, 32, 34, 39, 42, 49, 52, 53, 55, 65, 74, 75, 94
Exeter Cathedral, 65, 70, 71, 78, 80, 103

Falmouth Church, 109
Ford Abbey, 41
Fountains Abbey, 40, 41, 49, 96
Framlingham Church, 99
French Gothic, 31, 47, 48, 50, 51, 53, 61, 64, 65, 66, 67
Friars, The, Churches of, 91
Furness Abbey, 49, 96
Furniture, 19, 102, 103, 109

Gervase, the Chronicler, 46, 58
Glastonbury Abbey, 39, 44, 45
Gloucester Cathedral, 27, 28, 44, 78, 79, 81, 83, 95, 97
Gothic Revival, 15, 23, 109
Grandisson, Bishop of Exeter, 71, 78
Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, 51, 56
Guilds, Masonic, 58, 93
Guisborough Priory, 76

Hampton Court, 99, 100
Heckington Church, 76
Henry III, 62, 63
Henry VI, 92
Henry VIII, 92, 98, 99
Hereford Cathedral, 36, 43, 62, 65, 102
Hexham, 101
Hope, Mr. St. John, 45, 55
Howden Church, 13, 77, 83

Île de France, 46, 47, 48, 50, 51, 53
Iffley Church, 12, 36
Interdict, The, 12, 46

Jedburgh Abbey, 44
Jocelyn, Bishop of Bath and Wells, 45, 51, 56
Jones, Inigo, 99, 104

Kilpeck Church, 12, 36
Kirkham Priory, 77
Kirkstall Abbey, 40, 41

Lanercost, 44
Leeds, St. John's Church, 102
Le Mans Cathedral, 61, 64
Lewes Priory, 29, 40
Lichfield Cathedral, 16, 31, 65, 73
Lincoln Cathedral, 12, 21, 29, 31, 50, 52, 53, 54, 65, 71, 103
Liverpool Cathedral, 19
Llandaff Cathedral, 44
Llanthony, 43
London—
  Christ's Hospital, 73
  Ely Chapel, 73
  Holy Trinity, Aldgate, 73
  Old St. Paul's, 31, 51, 62, 65, 105
  New St. Paul's, 14, 99, 104–5, 106, 110
  St. Bartholomew's, Smithfield, 73
  Temple Church, 77
Londonderry Cathedral, 109
Louth, 88
Lynn, St. Nicholas, 83

Malmesbury, 39, 44
Manchester Cathedral, 13, 14, 89, 96
Margam, 43
Masons. *See* Craftsmen
Monastic Architecture—
  Augustinian, 29, 41, 42, 43, 44, 73, 76, 78, 79, 96
  Benedictine, 27–34, 36, 39, 41, 42, 43, 53
  Cistercian, 40, 41, 43–4, 63, 96, 101
  Cluniac, 36, 39–40
  Premonstratensian, 41, 76
Much Wenlock Priory, 40, 43

Neath, 43, 44
Netley Abbey, 65, 66
Newark Church, 83
Newcastle Cathedral, 13, 89, 96
Norman Architecture, 77 and sqq.
Northampton, St. Peter's, 36
Norwich Cathedral, 27, 28, 32, 83

Old Sarum, 44, 52
Ottery St. Mary Church, 78, 79
Oxford Cathedral, 44, 85, 96, 98, 102, 110
  Christchurch Staircase, 87
  New College, 85, 88

Paris, Matthew, 22
Paris, Notre Dame, 64, 65; St. Denis, 65
Patrington Church, 83
Pearson, J. L., 107, 109
Peterborough Cathedral, 11, 27, 29, 34, 39, 51, 52, 55, 77–96
Pontigny Abbey, 40, 41, 63
Poore, Bishop of Salisbury and Durham, 51, 56
Purbeck Marble. *See* Stones and Marbles

Quires, Monastic, 30

Reading Abbey, 79
Reginald, Bishop of Wells, 45, 46
Reims Cathedral, 64
Restoration, Cathedral, 15, 16, 19, 20, 54, 106, 108, 109
Richard of Farleigh, 79
Rievaulx Abbey, 40, 56
Ripon Cathedral, 11, 43, 76, 96, 97
Rochester Cathedral, 13, 15, 28, 36, 52, 55
Romsey, The Nuns' Church, 29, 44
Rouen Cathedral, 61, 67

St. Alban's Cathedral, 13, 27, 29, 32, 33
St. David's Cathedral, 44, 73
St. Paul's Cathedral. *See* London
Salisbury Cathedral, 12, 13, 16, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 58, 62, 65–6, 67, 79
Sall Church, 94
Selby Abbey, 13, 41, 42, 74, 76, 77, 78
Sens Cathedral, 46, 47
Sherborne Abbey Church, 49, 95, 96
Shobdon Church, 36
Shrewsbury, St. Mary's, 43
Southwell, 13, 51
Statuary, 19, 21, 39, 68, 77, 80, 81, 82, 99, 100, 110
Stones and Marbles 42, 48, 69, 76, 79, 80, 81
Strata Florida, 43

Taunton, St. Mary's, 95
Terrington St. Clement's, 101
Tewkesbury, 28, 44, 52, 78, 81, 82, 97
Tintern Abbey, 65
Truro Cathedral, 14, 106, 107

Vaulting, 34–6, 43

Wakefield Cathedral, 13, 89, 91, 96
Walpole St. Peter, 100
Walsingham Abbey, 83
Waltham Abbey, 74
Wells Cathedral, 12, 13, 29, 39, 44, 45, 49, 51, 52, 55, 67, 68, 79
Wells, St. Cuthbert's, 95
Welsh Marches, The, 43, 44
West Stafford Church, 14
Westminster Abbey, 19, 21, 28, 51, 61–5, 67, 68, 71, 84, 87
Westminster, St. Stephen's Chapel, 73, 83
William the Englishman, 12, 46, 53
William of Sens, 12, 46, 53, 56
William of Wykeham, 85, 87, 88, 104
Winchester Cathedral, 13, 27, 28, 31, 32, 33, 49, 52, 53, 71, 85, 88, 95, 100, 102
Windsor, St. George's Chapel, 13, 84, 88, 96
Worcester Cathedral, 13, 15, 28, 29, 31, 43, 49, 51, 52, 55
Wren, Sir Christopher, 103, 104
Wyatt, James, 54, 109
Wymondham Church, 94, 95

York Minster, 11, 13, 29, 31, 51, 75, 76, 77, 78, 82
Yorkshire Abbeys, The, 40.

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4 13

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